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CARDINAL WISEMAN'S
LECTURES
ON THE
PRINCIPAL DOCTRINES AND PRACTICES
OF THE
CATHOLIC CHURCH.



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LECTURES

ON THE

Principal Doctrines and Practices

OF THE

CATHOLIC CHURCH;

DELIVERED AT ST. MARY'S, MOORFIELDS, DURING THE LENT OF 1893.

By CARDINAL WISEMAN.

VOL. I.

NEW YORK:

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PREFACE

TO THE

THIRD AMERICAN EDITION.

AMONG the numerous and learned productions of Dr. (now Cardinal) Wiseman, his "Lectures on the Principal Doctrines and Practices of the Catholic Church" hold a distinguished place, and may be ranked in general among the most valuable specimens of doctrinal and polemical writing of which Catholic literature can boast.

Though important changes have taken place in the religious views and feelings of a large portion of the Christian world since the first edition of these Lectures was presented to the public, they still form a series of discourses admirably adapted to the present state of controversy between the Catholic Church and the various sects of Protestantism. The Tractarian movement in England and in this country has given a new phase to religious polemics, but it has not changed substantially the state of the question. The main points which it involves are developed and settled by Dr. Wiseman with a force of reasoning, a felicity of illustration, and a conciliatory spirit, which are unsurpassed, if equalled, in any other English work of a similar character. The Scriptural argument on the matters treated, is more fully and logically pursued than in most other works of this description. Hence, it will always be a standard reference on these subjects, useful alike to the members of the true church and to her adversaries. The former will find it an armory, where they will always be readily supplied with the most effective means of defending the Catholic cause; while the latter will be enlightened by its forcible and luminous reasoning, and convinced of the lamentable errors introduced by the pretended Reformation. With these remarks, the publishers offer it with confidence to the American community, and trust that it will receive the patronage which it so eminently merits.

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

IN the advent of 1835, I delivered a course of evening lectures in the Royal Sardinian Chapel, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, upon controversial subjects. It was comprised in seven lectures, and was honored by a very numerous attendance. At the approach of Lent, this year, I was desired by the venerable prelate, whom the London district has just lost, to undertake another course in the more spacious church of St. Mary's, Moorfields, upon the same subjects. It was proposed to confine it to a few lectures upon one topic; so that no disappointment might ensue, in case my health, or occupations, or a want of interest on the part of the public, should render it expedient to discontinue it. The subject selected was the rule of faith, or the authority of the Church, which occupies the first volume of this publication. But, through God's blessing, I found myself able to persevere in my undertaking; though, in the preceding Lent, I had been unequal to reading, in a room, two lectures of half an hour's duration, in a week:* and, at the same time, I had the consolation of witnessing the patient and edifying attention of a crowded audience, many of whom stood for more than two hours, without betraying any symptoms of impatience. This endurance, which could only be attributed to the interest felt in the truths of our holy religion, encouraged me to proceed with the less connected subjects, comprised in my second volume.

The lectures were taken down in short-hand: and it was understood that, upon my return to Rome, they should be prepared for publication. In the mean time, however, before the course was completed, an unauthorized edition began to appear, partly inaccurate, partly imperfect, and devoid of many references and illustra-

* The "Lectures on the Connection between Science and Revealed Religion," just published.

tions, which could not be well given in an extemporaneous delivery I was urged, as the only effectual means to prevent injury to myself or to my cause, to commence an edition sanctioned by myself.

This I undertook, though still engaged with a more laborious publication, which has caused considerable interruption in the regular issue of the numbers. I have added many notes and details, which I originally intended to reserve for my revision at Rome; and this has been a further cause of delay.

Those who attended the delivery of the lectures will observe many changes and additions, which are attributable to different causes. First, to the imperfect state of the short-hand writer's notes, which made it often less laborious for me to write a considerable portion of a lecture over again, than to correct the copy before me. Secondly, to the necessity, under which I often was in the delivery, of abridging or condensing, or omitting remarks and authorities, from want of time, which, in my publication, I have deemed it right to place at full. Thirdly, to my having occasionally turned back in a lecture to matter belonging to a preceding one, in consequence of difficulties communicated to me in the interval, or of an afterthought on my part; and such additions I have now transferred to their appropriate places. Fourthly, to my having omitted, in my second course, many views and passages which had appeared to make a sensible impression in my former one. This was done, partly from a desire to preserve a terser and more argumentative manner, partly from the fear of fatiguing an audience, partly composed of the same persons, by repetition. But these passages have been now inserted.

In spite of these changes or intended improvements, much of the crudeness of unwritten discourses must still pervade these volumes, and many expressions will not present that accuracy which a well meditated and carefully revised composition would have possessed. Had I come to England prepared for such an undertaking, I flatter myself that, with God's grace, much more justice would have been done to the holy and beautiful cause.

I need not say, that in this publication, as in every other that proceeds from my pen, I completely subject myself to the judgment of the Church, and mean to preserve the strictest adherence to every thing that she teaches

Before closing these preliminary remarks, I must acknowledge my obligations to two works, which have been of particular use to me, as they must be to any one treating upon controversial subjects. The first is the *Symbolik* of my learned friend, Prof. Möhler, the most profound work, if I may coin a phrase, on the Philosophy of Divinity, which our time has produced; the other, better known in this country, is the useful compilation of Messrs. Kirk and Berrington, from which I have in general drawn my quotations of the Fathers.

And now, having nothing further to premise, I commend this little book to the favor and protection of the Almighty, begging his blessing upon both writer and reader; and I commit it to the candid and unbiased judgment of all who shall take it into their hands; entreating them to lay aside, while they peruse it, all preconceived opinions regarding our faith, if they profess it not, and by no means to be offended with any contradiction which they shall therein find, of their manner of thinking. For, whatever they shall read hath been written with a kind intent, and hath proceeded from a charitable spirit, and wishes to be received and pondered in hearts that love Christian meekness, and long after unity and peace.

London,

On the Feast of our Lord's Transfiguration, 1836.

VOL. I.—B

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE SECOND EDITION.

SINCE the first edition of these lectures appeared, important changes have taken place in the religious state and feelings of this country. Upon being called on to prepare a second edition, I hesitated whether or no I should so far alter them as to adapt them better to the present order of things. I soon found that the labor would be that of a new work. But, further, I considered that I was desired to republish lectures once actually delivered; and that it would be a departure from historical accuracy, were I to give as spoken in 1836, that which could only have been true in 1843. I have, therefore, determined to publish the lectures in their original form, with such verbal or other trifling alterations and improvements as would not essentially alter their character; leaving it to later publications to represent the intermediate and present condition of religious opinions in England.

*St. Mary's College,
First Sunday of Advent, 1842.*

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LECTURE THE FIRST.

THE OBJECT AND METHOD OF THE LECTURES ON THE RULE OF FAITH.

2 CORINTHIANS vi. 1.

"Brethren, we exhort you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."

It is difficult to say, my brethren, whether the Church of God, in proposing to the meditation of the faithful the epistle read in the liturgy of this day, from which these words are taken, had you principally in view, or us, to whom is committed the ministry of His word. For, on the one hand, *you* are exhorted, not only that *ye receive not the grace of God in vain*, but farther, that *you* give offence to no man, lest thereby *our* ministry should be blamed. But while these words seem intended to exhort you, especially at this holy season, to attend to those instructions which are delivered for your edification, it must be owned, that the greater portion of the epistle is mainly directed to teach us, what are the qualities whereby the word of God should be recommended, and our ministry distinguished.

And, in the first place, we are commanded *to show ourselves worthy ministers of Christ in the word of truth, in the power of God, by the armour of justice, on the right hand and on the left*; that is to say, that clothing ourselves, as in mail of proof, with our conviction of the truth of all those doctrines which we deliver, we should stand forth, ready to encounter any opposition which they may meet; that we should urge, with all our strength, and with that energy which the word of God must always inspire, those truths which it has committed to our charge. But, while we are commanded thus to preach with power, it is expressly enjoined us, also, to preach in *sweetness, and in long-suffering, and in the Holy Ghost*; that is, to avoid any thing, in what we deliver, which could, in any wise, hurt the interests of virtues dearest to the Son of God. Whatever may be the strength and energy with which we endeavor to deliver our doctrines, they should be so tempered with meekness and gentleness, as to wound and hurt the individual feelings of no man. But there is yet a third quality in our ministry, prescribed by the Apostle,

which seems most particularly adapted to the circumstances of these times; and it is, that we should preach our doctrines *through good report, and through evil report, through honor and dishonor; as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet known.* That is to say, we must expect, that while some, indeed, will listen to us in the spirit of sincerity, and kindness, we must expect from others only an evil report of that which we shall deliver. With many, our preaching will gain for us rather dishonor than credit: for, however conscientious we may be in delivering doctrines, of whose truth we are firmly convinced, we must expect to be treated by many, perhaps even by those that hear us, as merely practised and cunning deceivers. It is thus prepared, therefore, and having fully before me these consequences, which the apostle of God has enumerated, and thereby has forewarned us of, that I open, this evening, a course of instruction whereunto what I am now delivering may serve as a general introduction.

I have, for the present, undertaken to address myself to one point only; to the examining, in a series of evening lectures, the fundamental principles of the Catholic and Protestant religions; in other words, the essential ground of separation between our Church, and those friends and fellow-countrymen whom we would gladly see cemented with us in religious unity. For this purpose, I will explain, in the simplest manner possible, the grounds whereupon we ground our faith, on which we build the doctrines which we profess; I will examine, in other words, whether we are justified in admitting, as the groundwork of all that we believe, an authority, a living authority, established by Christ in his Church, with his security against error—in contradistinction to that principle which admits of no supreme, infallible authority in doctrine, save the written word of God.

Now it is merely to this course—which may occupy, perhaps, six or seven lectures—that I wish, this evening, to preface some remarks, upon the object which it will have in view, and the method in which they will be conducted.

First, as to the object which I propose to discuss. If you ask any of our brethren who are separated from us, why it is that they are not Catholics, undoubtedly you will receive a multiplicity of answers, according to the peculiar character of each one whom you interrogate. But I have no doubt that the essence and substance of each reply would be this—that the Catholic Church is infected with innumerable errors, having engrafted upon the revelations of Christ many doctrines untaught by Him,

which are, consequently, but the invention of man ; that she has adopted many principles of morals and practice, directly at variance with those which He and his apostles inculcated ; so that, however truly she may have been once joined to the true and universal Church of Christ, she has allowed herself to be separated from it, by allowing such errors gradually to creep into her creed, and then sanctioning them, with her usurped authority, as divine.

But if you were to press the inquiry still closer, I am sure you would find the whole of these various grounds gradually reduced to *one*. You would be told, that the great besetting sin of the Catholic Church is, having rejected God's written word in his Scriptures as the only rule and authority of faith ; so much so, that the different corruptions, so often laid to her charge, have only been produced by the admission of the false principle, as it is called, of human authority ; and that, consequently, all other accusations are but minor points, which merge entirely in this one.

It is evident, therefore, that the question between us and Protestants, divides itself into two ; the one being a question of fact, the other of right. For, whether each of the various instances, commonly produced, is to be considered a corruption, an invention of man, or contradictory to the true revealed word of Christ, whether any Catholic dogma or practice, as transubstantiation, or confession, or purgatory, is to be pronounced a deviation from that which our Saviour instituted ; such questions form matters of separate consideration, involving distinct facts, each whereof may rest upon its own peculiar proofs. But, if you proceed to examine the ground whereon these are upheld, and find that Catholics maintain them all exclusively by the same principle, of their being taught by an infallible authority, vested in the Church ; it is evident, that all these various independent questions of fact are united, and concentrated in one : that is, in the inquiry, whether there be any authority which could sanction them, and upon which we are justified in believing them.

This is an important consideration : because it must be manifest, that, if we establish that right whereon, alone, we base all particular doctrines ; if, in other words, we can prove that, besides the written word of God, an infallible authority exists, and always has existed, in the Church—which, being under the guidance of God, cannot be deceived in sanctioning any thing as having been revealed by Him—assuredly, we likewise make good all those different points, on which we are charged with having

fallen into error, but which thus will be proved to have their foundation on an authority derived from God. And therefore, however, for the sake of entirely convincing the minds of those who doubt, and of more easily satisfying their peculiar difficulties, we may be induced to treat singly such points as I have instanced, it is evident, that they are all virtually and essentially demonstrated, if this one leading fundamental proposition can be proved: and, thus, all the questions of fact are absorbed in the one touching the divine right possessed by the Church to decide, without danger of error, in all matters regarding faith.

Now, my brethren, I may observe that this line of argument is completely opposite to that pursued, if I may use the expression, on the other side; for, not considering the manner in which these questions hang together, nothing is more common than to hear, or read, of preachers who represent the fundamental question as only one on a level with the others; and, instead of at once closing with the main point, *what is the rule of faith*, treat the withholding of the Bible from the faithful, as it is called, or the doctrine of tradition, as *one* among what are to be considered the corruptions of the Church of Rome.

But, in this process of reasoning, there is, besides, a manifest logical error. For, whether or no it be a corruption to admit tradition, or to pronounce the Bible ill-calculated for a rule of faith to each individual, depends upon, or rather is identical with, the question, whether God intended the Scriptures to be the only rule of faith. This the Protestant asserts, and the Catholic denies. But, therefore, when it is pretended to disprove the truth of the Catholic religion, by taxing it with additions to God's word, or with restraining the people from its use, it is manifest that the identical question is assumed as certain on one side: namely, that Scripture is the only rule of faith. For, if this be not true, and if tradition be equally a rule of faith, the Catholic Church is not guilty of the alleged corruption. But this, as I before observed, is the whole kernel of the controversy between the two religions. So that, first, the very point in dispute is taken for granted, and then an argument is based upon it. Assuredly, it cannot be difficult to prove Catholics in the wrong, when the Protestant principle of faith is taken as a lemma.

Thus much may suffice as to the grounds which would be given, were we to interrogate any one who is separated from the Catholic Church, Why he is not a Catholic?

But, supposing now that we proceeded farther with the ser-

tiny, and asked him, Why he is a Protestant? the answer must, certainly, be different; for no religion can stand upon mere negative grounds. You cannot believe one doctrine rather than another, simply because that other, which is proposed by some men, is false. Each religion must have grounds of demonstration essentially in itself, and independent of the existence of any other sect. We should have been able to prove the divinity of Christ, although Arianism and Socinianism had never arisen: and even now, if any one asked us for a demonstration of that doctrine, it would be no reply, to say that Arianism has been confuted, or that Socinianism has been proved false; but the dogma, and the system, of religion, which takes it for a foundation, must have their own essential reasons, independent of the rejection of another doctrine. Hence it is, that each one, if asked, not simply, why he is not a Catholic? but, why moreover he is a Protestant? must have positive reasons to give, wherefore he is a member of this communion.

It follows, necessarily, that, by this principle, a very common ground for being a Protestant is, at once, excluded. For preachers will too often imagine, and their hearers will follow them in the idea, that when they have held up to hatred, or rejected as impious and absurd, the tenets of Catholicity, they have thereby established the cause of Protestantism. How many works have been published "against the errors of the Church of Rome," or in confutation of Popery: how few systematic attempts are made to establish Protestant principles upon positive demonstration. Hence it is, that many consider religious belief only as based on a choice between the two religions, in which, the rejection of the one sufficiently demonstrates the other.

To such as are Protestants, on this ground, I would say—suppose that you lived in a country, or in any part of this country, where there was not within your reach a single Catholic; where, consequently, it had not been necessary to hold up our doctrines to your execration,—indeed, where there would have been no opportunity given you even of hearing them. It is evident, that you could not have been a Protestant upon this ground: but, that some positive reasons or motives, must have been proposed to you to satisfy you, that Protestantism is the true and normal state of the Christian religion; its rule of faith would have been propounded to you, based upon a series of positions and arguments, not relative or negative, but direct and positive.

But, my brethren, for the better understanding of this point, I wish to draw your attention to a very important distinction, and

one which, I fear, is often not sufficiently observed; it is *the distinction between the grounds of adhesion to, or communion with, any Church; and the grounds of conviction of its truth*. I am sure, that, if those who have been educated Protestants would ask their own minds, why they profess that religion, many would receive such an answer as would appear a justification to themselves for remaining in that communion, but yet does not involve the acceptance of the fundamental grounds of their religion. They would say, for instance—and I am sure that many, if they search their own breasts, will find it a reason of great weight—they would say, that they were born and educated in that religion; that it is the religion of their country; and that they think it shameful to abandon the faith of their forefathers. These are so many reasons, therefore, why they are Protestants; but they are precisely the same grounds which might be given for a thousand ordinary opinions; they are the very reasons by which you might account why you are attached to your country; but they do not include, in themselves, the essential, the radical reasons, upon which Protestant doctrines are based. They are motives which justify the individual, in his own idea, for remaining in a communion; but, certainly, they contain no pledge of having adopted the principle of any. Others will tell you, that they are of that persuasion, because they take it for granted that their religion is demonstrated; they have been accustomed to hear it spoken of as a thing satisfactorily settled, and they have not thought it necessary to trouble their minds by inquiring farther; learned men have done it for them; and the principles of the Reformation have been too firmly established, and too surely demonstrated, to need reconsideration or private study.

You must perceive—and a minute examination would only serve to demonstrate it—that, whoever gives you such reasons as these, for being a Protestant, only gives you such *motives* as influence him to continue in the profession of his creed, but they are not *reasons* which touch the grounds whereon Protestantism justifies its original separation from our Church; for the fundamental principle of Protestantism is this, that **THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD ALONE IS THE TRUE STANDARD AND RULE OF FAITH**. But, to arrive at this, there is required a long course of complicated and severe inquiry. You must, step by step, have satisfied yourselves, not merely of the existence of a revelation; but, that such revelation is really confided to man in these very books; that they have been transmitted to you in such a state, that is, that the originals have been so preserved, and the translations *&c*

made, as to make you confident, that in reading them you are reading the words which the Spirit of God dictated to the prophets and apostles; and, still more, that you have acquired, or that you possess, the lights necessary to understand them. You must not only be satisfied that the Bible has been given as the word of God; but you must be ready to meet the innumerable and complicated difficulties which are alleged against the inspiration of particular books, or individual passages; so that you may be able to say, that from your own knowledge and experience, you are internally convinced, that you have in that book the inspired word of God, in the first place; and, in the second, that you are not only authorized, but competent, to understand it. How few, my brethren, are there who can say, that they have gone through this important course! and, yet, it is the essential ground of Protestantism, that each one is to be considered responsible to God for every particular doctrine which he professes—that each one must have studied the word of God, and must have drawn from it the faith which he holds. Unless he does all this, he has not complied with those conditions which his religion imposes upon him; and, whatever reasons or motives he may feel or quote, for being a Protestant, it is manifest that they noways lead him essentially to the practical adoption of the groundwork of his religion.

You may, perhaps, be tempted to think that I have overstrained my assertions, for the sake of an argument. You may say, that it is nowise contrary to the principles of Protestantism, to accept religious truth on the teaching received in education; so that the long and painful process I have described is by no means required from each individual. I will, therefore, justify what I have asserted, by the authority of one considered eminently orthodox among the divines of the Church of England. Dr. Beveridge, in his "Private Thoughts," has recorded most exactly the train of reasoning he pursued, regarding the necessity of individual examination in matters of religion; and you will see that he goes much farther than I have ventured to do, in his statement of what Protestantism exacts. In the sixteenth page of that work he writes as follows, concerning the self-examination which he instituted into the grounds and motives of his belief.

"The reason of this my inquiry, is, not that I am, in the least, dissatisfied with that religion I have already embraced, but because it is natural for all men to have an overbearing opinion and esteem for that particular religion they are born and bred

up in. That, therefore, I may not seem biassed by the prejudices of education, I am resolved to prove and examine them all, and hold fast to that which is best, for though I do not, in the least, question but upon that inquiry, I shall find the true Christian religion to be the only true religion in the world, *yet I cannot say it, unless I find it upon good grounds to be so indeed.* For to profess myself a Christian, and believe that Christians only are right because my forefathers were so, is no more than the heathens and Mahomedans have to say for themselves.—*To be a Christian only upon the grounds of birth and education, is all one as if I was a Turk or a heathen, for if I had been born amongst them, I should have had the same reason for their religion as now I have for my own.* The premises are the same, though the conclusions be never so different. 'Tis still upon the same grounds, that I profess religion, though it be another religion." Here, then, according to this learned bishop, not only is the Protestant bound, as I said, to satisfy his mind individually on the ground of his creed, but he is no better than a heathen or Turk, if he be a *Christian* at all upon other grounds. But, then, he bears me out still further in my assertions, by owning that the great body of Protestants are only such, upon the unjustifiable grounds which he rejects, and which I above enumerated. For he says in continuation: "I can see but little difference betwixt being a Turk by profession, and a Christian only by education, *which commonly is the means and occasion, but ought by no means to be the ground, of any religion.*" In which words is found the very distinction I before laid down between the motives of adherence, and the principle of conviction. But at our next meeting I shall have better occasion to quote other and stronger authorities, for all I have asserted.

From what I have said, it is evident, that those motives of adherence, do not necessarily and essentially, lead to that principle; that is to say, that a person may be all his life a member of a Protestant Church, without once taking the pains to examine, by the serious and minute, and difficult method which is required, all the doctrines which he believes; he may possess, therefore, those reasons which keep him in communion with that Church, without his ever being led by them to the adoption of that course which it requires, as fundamental to his religion. Not only so; but I will say, that these motives are contradictory to that principle. For, if any man tells me, that he remains a Protestant simply because he has been so born and educated; that from what he has heard in sermons, or read in books, he is

satisfied that no other sect of Christianity has any grounds to support it—I reply to him, at once, that he is acting in direct contradiction to the principle whereby alone his religion allows him to be convinced; for conviction, according to that, must be based upon individual research, and individual satisfaction; and not merely, therefore, upon having been born in it, or having been educated in it by others; nor on having heard certain doctrines delivered from pulpits by men as fallible as himself; and certainly, still less on having heard the doctrines of others represented in a manner which I have no hesitation in saying, is almost always incorrect, and perhaps often such as to deserve a harsher name.

Now, on the other hand, let us examine the grounds upon which Catholics stand, viewing them precisely with the same distinction. And, I will own, that the grounds upon which Catholics adhere to their religion, or the motives by which they are brought to it, if they have not been therein educated, are not only as various and as numerous as those which I have mentioned, when speaking of Protestants, but, infinitely more so: and hence, it may be, that Catholics, if interrogated, will give the most various reasons why they are Catholics. But, now, observe the difference between the consequences in the two religions.

That the grounds upon which men may be brought to the true religion of Christ are various, is evident, both from the conduct of those whom the word of God has proposed to us as examples, and from what we have witnessed in all ages, even unto our own. For, there can be doubt, that in the preaching of the apostles, Christianity was not proposed upon one inflexible, unvarying system; but the announcers of God's word drew their evidences from any just grounds, which they knew must make the greatest impression upon those whom they addressed. It is, in fact, the beauty and the perfection of truth, that it should stand the action of the most varied tests. That is only an impure ore which, while it perhaps resists the action of one or two reagents, will in the end, yield before the energy of a third; for the pure metal will defy the action of every successive test. Truth may be compared to a gem without a flaw, which may be viewed in different lights; which, though held up to the eye on any side, and without artificial assistance, shall always present the same beauty and purity. But it is the characteristic of error, that it may, by the assistance of an artful setting, and by a certain play of light thrown upon it, produce the appearance of being without fault; but, if it be slightly turned, or shown under another angle, it instantly

discovers its imperfections. It was evidently, with this feeling that the apostles acted, and thus, by them, was Christianity preached. It was considered by them as a system, intended to meet the wants of all mankind, so that its true evidence resided in the mind of every individual, as well as in the general feelings and cravings of the entire human race. They felt that, whatever characteristic of truth their hearers might have adopted, whether the counterpart of a previous revelation, or the certain conclusions of profound philosophy, whether drawn from the yearnings of human nature after perfection, or from individual consciousness of misery and ignorance, whether consisting in the harmonious beauty of all the parts of a system, or in strong evidence in favour of special propositions, any would equally lead to the verification of Christianity. Thus, consequently, when they preached to the Jews—who possessed the volume of the old law, and in it types, prophecies, and other foreshadowings of the dispensation that was to come—the task was simply, to assume what these already believed, and show them its counterpart and fulfilment in the truths of Christianity, and in the character of our Saviour; and thus they generally won their way to conviction, through principles already held.* When Philip met the eunuch of the queen of Ethiopia on the highway, he found him reading a certain passage in the prophet Isaiah; and, from that passage alone, he convinced him of the truth of Christianity, and admitted him to baptism. He was searching for something that would correspond to the description there given: Philip merely proposes to him what a simple comparison led him to see, must be the counterpart to what he had read; and he, instantly, yielded himself a captive to faith, and adopted all the scheme of Christianity, implied in the baptismal rite.† But when St. Paul goes among the Gentiles, and stands before the learned Athenians, he does not appeal to prophecies, wherein they believed not, and which they knew not; for he does not consider it necessary, that they must, in a manner, first become Jews, before they be brought to Christianity. He has recourse to a totally different character of evidence; he preaches to them—men of a philosophical and studious mind—a sublimer morality than they had been accustomed to hear; he presents to them the striking doctrine of the resurrection; he shows them the futility and absurdity of their idolatry; he quotes to them the words of their own poets, to prove how necessary a purez

* Acts ii. iii.

† Acts viii.

belief in God, such as he preached, was to the human soul; he intimates, that, already among them was discernible a dissatisfaction with their present religion, and a certain longing after a better faith, from their having erected an altar "to the unknown God." He lays hold of those threads, which he found already prepared in the minds of his hearers, he attaches to them the evidences of Christianity, and thus insures the introduction of its doctrines within their breasts.*

When we come down to a later period, we find the same practice in the church—for in the first century, and in the second and in the third, we see totally different classes of motives, whereupon religion was preached, and received by men. We find, for instance, that in the first century, it was the courage of the martyrs, the seeing how flesh and blood could endure tortures and death in support of a religion, which brought the greater portion of converts to the truth. In the following centuries, a new system of evidences was introduced. The study of philosophy, which, under the patronage of the Antonines in the west, and through the impulse of the great Platonist schools in the east, was become very prevalent, led to the examination of Christianity in connexion with the philosophical systems of ancient Greece. It was soon seen that in all these there were problems innumerable, regarding the nature of God, the human soul, the origin and end of man, which all the acuteness and meditation of sages had not been able to solve, and whose solution, however interesting and necessary, they even acknowledge to be out of reason's power. But when Christianity was examined, it was discovered to present a full and consistent answer to every query, a satisfactory solution of every doubt, and a perfect code of ethics and mental philosophy. And this was considered by the Justins, the Clements, the Origenes, and other philosophical minds, a sufficient evidence of its truth. For, as we should not require other proof that a key was made for a certain lock, than finding that it at once insinuates itself through all its complicated wards, and fits in them, and moves among them without grating or resistance, and easily turns the bolts which they kept drawn, so did the true religion then, and so does it now, require no better demonstration of its being truly made for the mind and soul of man, and of its having come from the same all-wise Artist's hands as created them,—than the simple discovery of how admirably it winds into all their recesses,

* Acts xvii.

and fits into all their intricate mazes, turning at will the bars, and opening the entrance, of all the secret mysteries of self-knowledge.

Now, coming down to our own times, the same variety of motives is perceptible in the writings of those who have, within these late years, joined the Catholic faith. I do not allude so much to what has occurred in this country; because, however great may have been the spread of the Catholic religion since the commencement of this century amongst us, however frequent the conversions which we hear of, and see—all this is, in one respect, as nothing to what goes forward elsewhere. For while with us the work of conversion, with several brilliant exceptions, has been chiefly confined to persons of a less literary class, on the Continent—and I speak particularly of Germany—there is hardly a year, and there has not been for some time back, in which some individuals have not embraced the Catholic religion, who were previously distinguished in their own country, as men of first-rate abilities, and deep learning; often holding important situations, and particularly, employed as professors in Protestant universities. Now, many of these have published the motives which brought them to the Catholic religion. Those who peruse their accounts will find them often written in a profound reflective manner, and their arguments conducted with a terseness and closeness which, in this country, could be hardly popular. But, what I wish principally to note, their motives are as varied as the different pursuits in which each of the writers was engaged. You will find one who has made history the study of his life, and who has taught that branch of learning in one of the most celebrated universities, announce to you, that he has become a Catholic, simply by applying the sound principles of his science to the facts recorded in the annals of Europe.* You may hear another draw his arguments from motives connected with the philosophy of the human mind—from his discovering, that only in the Catholic religion can he find a system of it adapted to the wants of man; and another, whose enthusiasm has first been kindled by observing that the principle of all that is beautiful in art and in nature is nowhere to be found, except in the Catholic religion.† You will read a political economist, who tells you, that having made a deep study of that science, he was forced to admit, that only in Catholic morality could he

* Prof. Phillips, late of Berlin, now of Munich.

† Stolberg, Schlegel, Veith, Moliter, Beutain, &c.

discover the principles whereon it could be honestly conducted, and so was led to the practical adoption of the Catholic creed.* Another, by watching that very event which some have considered a proof of the demoralizing power of the Catholic religion, by attentive study of the dreadful tragedies of the French revolution, became a Catholic: and has since produced learned works treating of social rights.†

These are but a few out of many instances which I could quote; but, now, mark the difference between all these motives and those which I before described. I said, that the motives assigned by Protestants for their adhesion to their religion, did not lead to their true principle of conviction—to the adoption of the only grounds on which Protestantism is based. A man may be a Protestant for those reasons which are ordinarily given, without his being brought by that circumstance to the personal examination of each doctrine, or to that deep study of God's written word, upon which alone his religion allows him to be a Protestant. But, in every one of the cases to which I have referred,—no matter whence the conviction came, no matter what was the first impulse, or the line of argument which brought the individual into communion with the Catholic Church,—the grounds of connection or adhesion necessarily ended in the Catholic principle of conviction. For none of these men became Catholics by discovering the true principles of political economy, or of history, or of the fine arts, or of philosophy, in the Catholic religion. These various motives produced admiration and esteem for it; but, however learned or distinguished, we should not, and could not, have called any of them ours, though they had persevered in these sentiments, unless they had specifically adopted the Catholic principle of Church authority, and submitted their understanding and mind implicitly to its teaching. Here, then, we have a characteristic difference between the groundwork of the two religions. For, on the one hand, there is no security given in the profession of Protestantism, that its fundamental principle of individual examination has been *practically* adopted: while, on the other, no man can be for one instant a Catholic, without the vital principle of catholicity being actually embraced; nay, no man can become a Catholic save through, and by its reception. The Catholic Church is thus as a city to which avenues lead from every side, towards which men may travel

* See De Caux's First Lecture on Political Economy.

† Adam Müller.

from any quarter, by the most diversified roads,—by the thorny and rugged ways of strict investigation,—by the more flowery paths of sentiment and feeling: but, arrived at its precincts, all find that there is but one gate whereby they may enter, but one door to the sheepfold, narrow and low, perhaps, and causing flesh and blood to stoop as it passes in. They may wander about its outskirts, they may admire the greatness of its edifices and of its bulwarks, but they cannot be its denizens and children, if they enter not by that one gate, of absolute, unconditional submission to the teaching of the Church.

Assuredly, there is something here beautifully contrasted, to the eye of the philosopher, with the manifest imperfections of the other system. There is a natural and obvious beauty in the simplicity of this basis, which at once gives stability and unity to conviction, which makes the terms whereon men are received into the pale of a religion, equal to all, whether learned or illiterate, quick or dull of apprehension, and which obliges all to divest themselves of their peculiar prejudices and opinions, if they clash with the doctrines taught.

But the beauty of this system ends not here: for, after each one has thus embraced the religion, upon a principle one and indivisible, his affections and tastes are allowed their fullest play; they may devote themselves to the adorning and commending of his religion, from the various storehouses of topics which their pursuits may afford them; and he will in it find a fitting and a perfect theme to repay all his zeal and love. The motives which led him to the adoption of the faith will still continue within him as links of attachment to its profession; but the ground of his belief will be unchanged for ever.

And this leads me to another reflection of no mean importance. It is extremely common, to ask an untutored Catholic on what grounds he became, or is, a Catholic; and it will often appear, that the answer which he gives is not logical, or satisfactory. It probably is not to you; but, mark! while he answers the question, he is not giving you *the grounds* on which he believes the doctrine of the Catholic Church: he is only giving you the motives which brought him, or bind him to it; and these grounds are as different, as diverse, as the affections, as the pursuits, and as the characters of individuals. You have not in your mind the key necessary to understand the force of those motives which influenced him. But it is not on their strength that he believes in transubstantiation; it is not on that ground—whatever it be—that he believes in auricular confession, or that he practises

it. He is not giving you, therefore, the grounds of his belief; he is giving you the reasons by which he was led to satisfactory inquiries regarding the grounds of faith. And this is certainly remarkable, that in every one who has embraced the Catholic religion, whatever was his difficulty in first receiving it, whatever may have been the first obstacles to his complete conviction, when once he has embraced and received it, it takes as strong a hold upon his affections and thoughts, as it could have done if he had been educated in it from his infancy. It is, if I may illustrate it by a comparison, like a shoot or slip, which is forced into the ground, and requires a certain degree of violence for the purpose. It must be by a sharp and wounding point that it is made to penetrate the hard surface of the earth; but no sooner has it once been there placed, than it sends forth shoots, to go and suck the nourishment on every side; and the earth that has so received it, closes and entwines itself around it, and becomes kindly and attached to it: so, that if you should wish, after a short time, to root it up, you must rend and tear that earth in pieces, into which originally it seemed to be driven against its will.

But now, allow me to contrast with the examples of conversion which I have just given you, others of a different class.

I have told you, that in perusing the works of men who have within these few years become members of the Catholic Church—men of talent and erudition—we shall hardly find two of them agree upon the grounds which they record, as having induced them to embrace the Catholic religion. But you may also read similar works on the other side, purporting to give the grounds upon which individuals have abandoned the Catholic Church, and become members of some Protestant communion. It is, indeed, very seldom, that men of any considerable ability, or at all known to the public for their learning, have written such treatises; but still, such as they are, they have been, in general, widely disseminated. It has been thought useful to throw them, in a cheap form, among the public, and particularly among the lower orders, that they may see examples of conversion from the Catholic religion. Now, I have read such of these as have fallen in my way, and have noted, that, instead of the rich variety of motives which have brought learned men to the Catholic Church, there is a sad meagreness of reasoning in them; indeed, that they all, without exception, give me but one argument. The history, in every case, is simply this: that the individual—by some chance or other, probably through the ministry of some

pious person—became possessed of the word of God, of the Bible; that he perused this book; that he could not find in it transubstantiation or auricular confession, that he could not discover in it one word of purgatory, or of venerating images. He perhaps goes to the priest, and tells him that he cannot find these doctrines in the Bible: his priest argues with him, and endeavors to convince him that he should shut up the book which is leading him astray; he perseveres, he abandons the communion of the Church of Rome—or, as it is commonly expressed, the *errors* of that Church—and becomes a Protestant. Now, through all this process, the man was a Protestant; from the beginning he started with the principle, that whatsoever is not in that book, cannot be true in religion, or an article of faith—and that is the principle of Protestantism. He took Protestantism, therefore, for granted, before he began to examine the Catholic doctrine. He set out with the supposition, that whatever is not in the Bible, is no part of God's truth; *he* does not find certain things in the Bible; and he concludes that *therefore* the religion that holds these, is not the true religion of Christ. The work was done before; it is not an instance of conversion; it is only a case of one, who has lately, perhaps unconsciously, had his breast filled with Protestant principles, coming openly to declare them. The ground on which the inquiry should have been conducted was, manifestly, not to assume, in the first instance, that there is no truth but what is expressly contained in the Bible; but to examine whether that is the only rule of faith, or whether there are not other means also of arriving at a knowledge of God's revelation.

From all that I have said, you will easily deduce, that the object which I shall have in view, through my first course of lectures, will be to examine the relative value of the two RULES OF FAITH; to see whether the Catholic is not fully justified in the admission of this principle, that God has appointed His Church, the infallible and unfailing depository of all truth.

I now come to say a few words on the manner in which the inquiry shall be conducted. You will naturally at once suppose, that these will be what are commonly called *controversial* lectures. I own that I have a great dislike—almost an antipathy—to the name; for it supposes that we consider ourselves in a state of warfare with others; that we adopt the principle which I reprobated at the commencement of my discourse—of establishing our doctrines by overthrowing those of others. Now, my brethren, it is not so. We hold, that the demonstration of our

belief, and of its grounds, may be conducted without the slightest reference to the existence of any other system. I might prove the doctrines of the Catholic Church to you, precisely as I should if addressing an eastern audience, who had never, perhaps, heard even the name of Protestantism. I could expound the grounds on which we believe, without ever adverting to the existence of any opposing system. We do not wish to think that we have adversaries or enemies to attack; for we are willing to consider all who are separated from us, as in a state of error indeed, but of *involuntary* error. We hope that, having been educated in certain principles and opinions, and not having taken leisure to examine sufficiently into the grounds of their faith, or having had their first impressions so far strengthened by the subsequent efforts of their instructors, that it is almost impossible for any contrary impression to be made, they are rather separated from us than armed against us—rather wanderers from the city of God, than enemies to its peace. Hence, it is not in the way of controversy, it is not as attacking others, or even as wishing to gain a victory, or to have a triumph, that I intend to address you. In stating and explaining our own doctrines, I will avoid, as much as possible, the examination of others' opinions; because I am satisfied that the course of argument to be pursued, is such as, in establishing our doctrines, will prove them not merely true, but *exclusively* true. The method, therefore, which I shall follow, I would rather call *demonstrative* than controversial. It will consist in laying before you the grounds of our doctrines, rather than in endeavoring to overthrow those professed by others. It will likewise be essentially *inductive*—that is to say, I will not take any one single principle for granted, which will possibly bear a dispute. I will begin with the simplest elements, and they shall, as they go on, develop themselves, by their own power. It shall be my endeavor to conduct the inquiry precisely as one would do who has no prejudice on either side; but who, using such measure of sagacity or inductive skill, in tracing out proofs, as he may possess, should proceed to search out what is right and true. We will open the word of God; we will examine it by such principles as all must admit; we will discover what are the only consequences that can be drawn from it; and for whom the consequence shall be, his doctrine we will embrace. This is the simple method which I intend to follow; and this will certainly exclude what I fear has been too common elsewhere, and that, not merely because the method itself will not allow it to enter, but because I trust, that whatever method

were pursued in this holy place, it would not admit it:—I mean, the system of misrepresentation of the doctrines of others, which is, alas! too common in this city. I have no hesitation in saying, that never yet has an attempt been made to expound Catholic doctrines, in any other place of worship but our town, without those doctrines being most strangely misrepresented—without their being, in the first place, themselves made totally different from what they are; and then, supposed to rest on grounds which we absolutely reject.

Now, as I said before, I shall scarcely have to touch on the opinions of others; I do not intend to involve myself in questions regarding what any sect or section of Christians believes; I will lay before you, what the Catholic doctrine is, and endeavor to explain the proofs of that doctrine; and if I have to answer objections—which will be extremely seldom—or to comment upon the principles of others—I will always make it a point, as much as possible, to give my statement in the words of some accredited defender and supporter of the Protestant cause.

The last quality and characteristic which I shall be anxious to infuse into this course of instruction, will be that which the epistle I have quoted to you, is particular in inculcating—that is, a spirit of mildness and of gentleness, the avoiding of any expression which can possibly wound the feeling of any individual, the refraining from any term of reproach, and from the use of any name which is reprobated and disliked by those of whom we speak. It shall be my endeavor to keep clear, as much as possible, of individuals, except when obliged to quote their words, in justification of expressions I may use. This is the practice, and always has been, amongst us. It has been our rule, in treating of the differences between us and many of our fellow-countrymen, to speak of them, as much as we can, with charity and compassion. We are accused, indeed, of an eager spirit of proselytism, of going from door to door to gain converts: and were there any bitterness in our heart, were there any feeling of dislike, of antipathy to others, were there any thing but the true spirit of kindness and charity, and love of our neighbors in God, in the motives of our ministry, assuredly we should not take the trouble and pains for which we are reproved.

But, my brethren, this has been the fate of the Catholic religion at all times, though never so much as now, that it has to be preached less in honor than in dishonor—in evil repute rather than in good repute. In whatever way we may propose our doctrines, it is impossible for them not to be reprobated, and

misrepresented too. We may say, as did our Saviour to the Jews, "Unto whom shall I liken the men of this generation, and to what are they like? They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and speaking one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned, and ye have not wept. For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine:—and ye say, He hath a devil. The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a glutton and drinker of wine, a friend of publicans and sinners! And wisdom is justified by all her children!"* If the Catholic Church enjoin the doctrine of severe mortification and penance, she is immediately traduced as opposed to the word of God, by substituting the efficacy of man for the merits of Christ. If, at other times, she seem to relax that severity which others would desire, and allow innocent mirth to mingle with the close of that day which God has dedicated to his service, then is she, on the contrary, represented as being lax in her morals, and as encouraging the profanation of God's holy seasons. If her anchorites gird themselves with sackcloth, and retire for prayer and meditation from the haunts of men, it is a gloomy and unholy superstition; if her priests minister at the altar, clad in costly raiment, it is pronounced mere vanity, and a worldly spirit. And thus, whatever we do, whatever doctrine we teach, whatever practice we inculcate, it is sure to be found reprehensible; and some ground or other is easily discovered, whereon it must be condemned.

But then, let us fulfil the other portion of this text, and justify the divine wisdom of our religion in our conduct. You, who well know this wisdom, and the principles inculcated by your teachers and guides, have often heard how, even in this respect, it was meet for your religion to resemble its divine founder; how, as He was ever calumniated, and persecuted, and ill-treated by men, so must you likewise expect that—whether in prosperity or in adversity—your doctrines, and opinions, and institutions, should be held up to the hatred and the scorn of the world. But remember, that while your Redeemer submitted in every other respect to the will of his persecutors, while he allowed himself to be bound, and scourged, and crowned with thorns, and mocked, and scoffed, and even crucified for your sins, there was one thing only, in the course of his passion, wherein he refused to yield to the designs of his enemies; one point in which he

* Luke vii. 32

would not submit to their inflictions; and that was, when they attempted to force gall and vinegar upon his lips; for, *when he had tasted he would not drink.** And in this respect, therefore, do you likewise refuse to submit to that whereunto others may wish to drive you. Allow nothing which they may say—allow no excesses on their part—to lead you to the utterance of one word of bitterness or acrimony. Let them not ever gain the triumph over you of making you, in this respect, like themselves, by extorting from you reviling and scoffing words, instead of sound and solid argument, urged in the mildest phrase.

In conclusion, my brethren, allow me to say, that it is only the grace of God which can give us mutual strength to go through the task which I have proposed; that all our efforts will fail, that your attendance will be without profit, and my ministry without fruit, unless God send his blessing upon us; unless he give force and efficacy to my unworthy lips, and put a candid and teachable spirit in your hearts; that so ye may be moved to come hither, not by idle curiosity, or a desire to hear something new, but from a real anxiety every day to learn more and more, and to improve yourselves, not merely in the knowledge of your faith, but in the practice of all that it inculcates and teaches; that so you may be not only hearers of the word, but also doers—a blessing which I pray God to grant you evermore. Amen.

* Matt. xxvii. 34.

LECTURE THE SECOND.

ON THE PROTESTANT RULE OF FAITH.

1 THESSALONIANS v. 21.

"Try all things; and hold fast that which is good."

I own, my brethren, that I feel considerably rejoiced and comforted, at seeing the good-will with which you have commenced your attendance upon this course of lectures; and still more, at seeing such a full attendance here this evening. For, I must acknowledge, that I have feared lest the necessarily abstract nature of the subject which I treated in my opening discourse, added to the circumstance that, from previous fatigue, I had not, in my estimation, done justice to the interesting view which I wished to propose, might, perhaps, have deterred many from continuing their attendance upon what promised such comparatively slight interest. Nothing, indeed, my brethren, is easier than to throw considerable interest over any subject, by condensing its facts into a small space, and crowding together the most striking aspects that it will bear. But, although upon another occasion I may have been compelled to follow that course, it is always an unsatisfactory one; because, by it, injustice is done to two important parties—the cause in hand, and those who are anxious to hear its demonstration. To the cause, for this simple reason, that, although, in every question, there must be some more leading and more important points, yet are the connecting links likewise of essential importance; and though, by sweeping away that intermediate matter, you may place the object in a more striking and moving point of view: yet you essentially weaken it, by depriving it of that support and consistency which the connection between it and other parts of the system, through those less important elements, alone can give. And injustice is, likewise, done to those who come to learn: for, it may perchance be that their difficulties, if they differ from us, do not so much lie in the leading and important features of the case, as in some comparatively insignificant circumstance, some trifling objection, which, from their particular cast of mind,

has much greater force with them than we can understand; and so they may depart with the impression, that we have only acted the part of skilful advocates, putting forward some few favorable points, while we pass over the weaker portions of our case. And hence it is that I shall have, more than once, to claim your indulgence—but I feel that, on simply asking it, the boon is granted—for entering into more minute particulars, and comparatively secondary matter, than may appear to some of sufficient value to occupy attention. Even this evening, it will be impossible for me to grapple so closely with the subject in hand as I intend, hereafter; and if, upon seeing me place in the way so many preliminary observations, and remove, to a certain distance, the closer examination of the important points which I have proposed for discussion, any one should be tempted to think that it is my wish to escape from them, I only entreat of him to continue his attendance; and I will promise him, that, in due time, after such introductory observations as I consider requisite for the full understanding of the question, he shall see every point met in the fairest, the fullest, and the most impartial manner. Now, therefore, to connect what I have to say this evening, with what I have already premised, I shall take the liberty of giving you, in a few sentences, what I said at our last meeting. I there endeavored to establish a very important distinction between the grounds on which a man justifies himself to his conscience and conviction, in his adherence to any particular religion, and the essential foundation whereupon rests its creed—the principle, if I may so say, of its very existence. I observed, that many professed the Protestant religion, merely because they were born in it; because they have always heard it spoken of as certain and true, or because they are accustomed to hear every other religion rejected and condemned, as absolutely untenable; and I pointed out the clear distinction, between this reasoning and the grounds, on which that religion must justify itself. I observed that a person might be a Protestant or most of these motives—and the great majority of Protestants are so on some one of them—and that yet, not one of these touched upon, or led to, the fundamental principle which Protestantism proposes as its basis—the individual examination, and discovery of its doctrines in the Word of God; whereas, on the contrary, it was impossible for any man to be brought to the Catholic religion, or to adhere to it, upon any principle whatever, without, in the act of entering it, embracing, and identifying with his conscience and conviction, the fundamental principle of Catho-

licity. For no one is, or can be a Catholic, but by his entire submission to the authority of his Church.

The consequence which I wished to draw from these reflections was of an important character: namely, that, in all discussions upon this solemn topic, we have nothing to do with the motives which many give, why they are attached to, and love, their religion; but only with the grounds whereupon they believe, whereupon they found their faith, and justify their particular profession; and this leads us to the examination of what is the vital, fundamental principle of the Protestant, and what of the Catholic, religion. The discussion of these two points will form the subject of the course on which I have entered. This evening, I will confine myself exclusively to the treating of that principle which is held by Protestants, as the essential and fundamental principle of their faith. And having, thus, occasion to speak so largely of the Word of God, and wishing to complete that section of my subject, I will explain what is the doctrine of Catholics regarding it. But I will proceed no farther with their belief, reserving to myself to expound it more largely and satisfactorily at a future meeting.

There is nothing easier than to give the popular statement of the difference between Catholics and those who dissent from them, regarding THE RULE OF FAITH. It is very easy to say that Catholics admit the authority of the Church; and that Protestants allow of no rule but the written Word of God. Such a statement appears, at first sight simple; but, if any one will take the pains to analyze it, he will find it fraught with considerable difficulties.

For instance, what is the meaning of the Word of God, or the Scriptures, being "the only rule of faith?" Does it mean, that it is to be the rule for the Church, or for its individual members? Does it mean, that public declarations or the symbols of faith are based upon the Word of God? or, to borrow the language of some ancient philosophers who used to say that each man is a microcosm or a little world—shall we consider him likewise, as a little Church with power of examining and deciding upon matters of religion? Does it mean, that there is an individual light promised, or granted, by God, so that each one is under the guidance and infallible authority of the Holy Ghost; or that, abandoned to those lights which he may possess, from his own learning or acquirements, his peculiar measure of mind and understanding is to be his rule and guide in drawing his faith from the Word of God? But to show that these difficulties are not

imaginary, let us examine the Articles of the Church of England, in which its rule of faith is laid down; articles which all the clergy must subscribe to, and teach as their belief.* In the Sixth Article it is said, that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation; so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." In this passage there is not one word about the individual right of any one to judge for himself—it only teaches that no one is to be charged with the belief of any doctrine, no one can be required to give his adhesion to any article, which is not contained in the Word of God. But it is here evident, that the application of the rule is placed in other hands; that it is intended to prevent some one, not named, from exacting belief beyond a certain point; it is a limitation of the power to *require* submission to the teaching of some authority. That this authority is the Church, there can be no doubt, if we compare the Twentieth Article. There it is said, that "The Church hath power to ordain rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith; and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing contrary to God's Word written; neither may it so expound any passage of Scripture, as to be repugnant to another."†

* I have been censured for including the Church of England among those Protestants who hold private judgment, and arguing against it on this ground. I am ready to acknowledge that there is a large and respectable body in the Anglican Church, to whose principles the reasoning of this and other lectures will not apply; and this is even more true now than when the lectures were delivered. But I should greatly doubt whether among the great numbers who attended them there were any, or at least sufficient, to warrant my departure from the discussion of *popular* Protestantism, whether in or out of the Church. To such, therefore, must the published lectures be considered as addressed. The peculiar views of a certain portion of the English Church, represented by the Oxford Divines, belong to a totally different sphere of controversy.

† The reader will observe, that I overlook the important inquiry, whether this article, as far as "and yet," is genuine or not. Dr. Burnet acknowledges that it is not found in the original manuscripts containing the subscriptions; and it is absent from the copy of the articles approved by Parliament. The bishop supposes it to have been added between the subscription and the engrossing; and fancies the engrossed copy to have perished at Lambeth. (*Exposition of the Thirty-nine Articles*, Lond. 1695, p. 10.) But this conjecture, as well as other arguments in favor of the clause, are ably confuted by Collins, in his "*Priestcraft in Perfection*." Lond. 1710. To his arguments we may add, that, in the "Articles of Religion agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland, in 1615," Lond. 1629, the clause on authority in controversies of faith is omitted, though the articles are verbatim the same, with additions. In the "Copie of the proceedings of some worthy and learned Divines, appointed by the Lords, to meet at the Bishop of Lincoln's, in Westminster, touching innovations in the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England,"

This Article seems further to increase the complexity and confusion of the rule of faith, as laid down by the Established Church. It says, in the first place, that the Church has authority, in matters of faith; and then, that the Church cannot prescribe any thing contrary to Scripture. But, if it be determined, in these solemn terms, that the Church shall not enforce doctrines nor define systems contrary to the Word of God, the very proposition recognises the necessity of a superior authority, to control its decisions. For, if we should say, that, in this country, the judges of the land have authority in matters of law, but yet shall not be allowed to decree any thing contrary to the statutes; I ask you, is it not necessarily implied in the very enunciation of that proposition, that an authority somewhere exists, capable of judging whether those magistrates have contravened that rule, and of preventing their continuing so to act. When, therefore, it is, in like manner, affirmed that the Church has authority in matters of faith, yet a rule is given whereby the justice of its decisions is to be determined, and no exemption from error is allowed to it, it is no less implied that, besides the Church, there is some superior authority to prevent its acting contrary to the code that has been put into its hands. Now, what authority is this, and where does it reside? Is it that each one has to judge for himself, whether the Church be contradicting the express doctrines of Scripture, and, consequently, is each person thus constituted judge over the decisions of his Church? If so, this is the most anomalous form of society that ever was imagined. For, if each individual, singly in himself, has greater authority than the whole collectively—for the Church is a congregation formed of its members—the authority vested in that whole is void and nugatory.

Wherever there is limitation of jurisdiction, there must be superior control: and if *the Church* is not to be obeyed when it teaches any thing contrary to Scripture, there are only two alternatives,—either that limitation supposes an impossibility of its so doing, or it implies the possible case of the Church being lawfully disobeyed. The first would be the Catholic doctrine, and at open variance with the grounds whereon the Protestant Churches justify their original separation. The Catholic, too, will say that the Church *cannot* require any thing to be believed that is contrary to God's written word; but then the word which

Lond. 1641, we read, p. 1, "Innovations in Doctrine, 'quære, Whether, in the Twentieth Article, these words are not inserted, *Habet Ecclesia auctoritatem in controuersiis fidei.* "

I pronounce emphatically is taken by him literally ; the Church *cannot* teach any such doctrine, because God's word is pledged that she shall not. The superior control exists in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. But if the Church, not being infallible, may teach things contrary to Scripture, who shall judge it, and decide between it and those whose obedience it exacts? "If the salt lose its savor, with what shall *it* be salted?" In other words, if there be a tribunal of appeal from this fallible Church, where does it exist; in whose persons is its representation vested? Surely these are simple and obvious inquiries, resulting from this ill-conceived theory of Church authority.

But if I mention them, I cannot be expected to answer them ; nor is this my duty. I propose them merely to show some of the many difficulties which arise against the ordinary and popular way of propounding the Protestant rule of faith. Well, then, we will take the rule with all its difficulties—we will take it on the terms on which it is commonly understood, namely, that it is the prerogative, the unalienable privilege, of every Christian, to establish for himself the truth of his doctrines from that Book which God has delivered to man ; nay more, that, (according to Doctor Beveridge's rule, which you will see confirmed by other and later authors,) each individual is bound to look to the proofs of what he specifically believes, and obliged to be a member of his Christian Church, on grounds which he has himself verified. I will first take the principle in this general and broad view, and see how far it is possible to apply it as the basis of faith ; to simplify the examination, I will look at it under three different aspects. First, I will discuss the ground or authority for this rule ; secondly, its application ; and thirdly, its end.

I. I must suppose that the moment human authority is alluded to, in connection with the doctrines of Christianity, there will be the greatest jealousy and reserve about allowing it, in any way, to interfere in the scale or range of argument whereby the principle that excludes all authority has to be established. I must suppose that every Protestant, in examining the grounds of his religion, is most careful not to allow a single ingredient to mingle which might seem to give the authority of man any weight among the grounds on which he believes. I am willing to suppose that he must have a method independent of this dreaded principle, whereby he can satisfy himself individually of the divine authority of the Book in which he exclusively believes : and there must be some train of reasoning, whereby he can assure himself that the written record, in which he professes

to put his whole trust, and which he holds as the only rule of faith, is really a volume of divine revelation. If it be the duty of every one to take the word of God as his only and sufficient rule, that rule thereby becomes universal in its application, being the rule of every individual member of the Christian Church. The grounds, therefore, on which it rests must be equally universal, and within the reach of all. If every man, even the most illiterate, have a right to study the word of God,—if it be not only his right, but his duty to do so, and thence to draw his belief,—it is no less his duty to satisfy himself that it is the word of God: and the process of reasoning by which to arrive at that conclusion must be naturally so simple, that none who is obliged to use it can be debarred from its construction.

The investigation whereby he can reach the conclusion that the sacred volume put into his hand is really the Word of God, is of a twofold character. In the first place, before any Protestant can even commence the examination of that rule, which his religion proposes to him, he must have satisfied himself, that all the books or writings collected together in that volume, are really the genuine works of those whose names they bear; and that no such genuine work has been excluded; so that the rule be perfect and entire. Then, in the second place, he must satisfy himself, by his own individual examination, that this book is inspired by God.

Now, my brethren, allow me to ask you, how many of those who profess the Protestant religion have made these examinations? How many can say, that they have satisfied themselves, in the first place, that the canon of Scripture put into their hands, or that collection of sacred treatises which we call the Bible, really consists of the genuine, authentic works of their supposed writers, and excludes none that have a claim to equal authenticity? I do not intend to show you the difficulties of this process, on my own authority; I do not maintain that it is not followed by Protestants, on my own assertion; nor do I intend to demonstrate, that it is the duty of every Protestant to search and satisfy himself, by my bare word,—but, I will quote to you the authority of two divines, who are generally considered learned and well-informed in this department of sacred literature.

The first whom I will quote, is the Reverend Jeremiah Jones, a celebrated Nonconformist divine, at the commencement of the last century; as he died in 1724. He published a very learned and careful, and even difficult treatise, entitled, “A new and full method of settling the canonical authority of the New Testament.”

The Reformation had already lasted a great many years, and yet, it was only then that he found out a *new* and *full* way of establishing the New Testament in canonical authority. To the first volume he prefixes a long dissertation on the importance and difficulties of his subject. I will content myself with reading to you the heads of the sections or essays which compose it, as summed up at its commencement. I quote the edition published at Oxford, in 1827; in the first page of which we have the following heads: "First, that the right settling of the canonical authority of the books of the New Testament *is attended with very many and great difficulties*. Second, that it is a matter of the greatest consequence and importance. Third, *that a great number of Christians are destitute of any good arguments for their belief of the canonical authority of the books of the New Testament*. Fourth, *that very little has been done on this subject*."

After this, we have an enumeration of the reasons why it is exceedingly difficult to prove the authenticity of all the books which compose the New Testament. The first is, the immense number of works, professing to be written by apostles and evangelists, which are to be excluded from the canon; for Toland, in his *Amyntor*, enumerates eighteen such, which have been condemned, and, consequently, are not now received; and Mr. Jones remarks that the list is very far from being complete. Then there are other works, acknowledged to be written by disciples of the apostles, by persons in the same situation as St. Luke and St. Mark. Such are Barnabas and Hermas; whose writings, accordingly, some divines of the last century thought should be received as portions of the canon of Scripture. For Pearson, Grabe, and others, consider them genuine productions of disciples; and therefore good reasons should be given why they are not to be received, as well as the writings of St. Luke or St. Mark. These, our author observes, are matters of serious difficulty, and require immense reflection and trouble to be satisfactorily explained. In fact, he occupies three closely printed volumes in examining and discussing them. Yet, all this is only preliminary to the inquiry, whether the Scripture be the Word of God.

The second head is, "that this is a matter of the greatest consequence and importance," and here this writer has remarked, precisely what I have, that it is the duty of every member of the Reformed Church to satisfy himself, individually, of the grounds on which he receives the Bible. In the third section, he states, "that a great number of Christians are destitute of

any good arguments for their belief of the canonical authority of these Books;" and this is completed by the last section, wherein he proves, "that nothing at all had been done by the Church of England, or the foreign Reformed Churches, to prove that these were the Scriptures!" I will now quote you his own words, to put his sentiments beyond doubt, and to justify all that I have said. In page 12, he speaks thus: "He who has but the least occasion to acquaint himself with the religious state of mankind, cannot but with surprising concern have observed, how slender and uncertain the principles are, upon which men receive the Scriptures as the word of God. The truth is, though a very painful one, that many persons commence religious at once, they don't know why, and so with a blind zeal persist in a religion which is they don't know what; and, *by the chance of education, and the force of custom, they receive these Scriptures as the Word of God, without making any serious inquiries, and consequently, without being able to give any solid reasons why they believe them to be such.*" The greater portion of Protestants, then, according to this divine, believe in the Scriptures, without having any foundation for doing so—they receive it gratuitously as the Word of God, without being able to prove it, or ever having heard the reasons on which it can be proved.

Yet this is not so strong as what I will now read, from another divine, of nearly the same period; I mean the celebrated Richard Baxter, who, in his well-known and popular work, "The Saints' Everlasting Rest," speaks very feelingly on the subject, and puts a very strong argument into our mouths. In page 197, he says, "Are the more exercised, understanding sort of Christians able by sound arguments to make good the verity of Scripture? Nay, are the meaner sort of ministers able to do this? Let them that have tried, judge." Not only, then, according to him, the better exercised and understanding class of Protestants, but even the lower order of ministers or teachers, are not able to prove the truth of Scripture. In page 201, we have the following still more remarkable passage:—"It is strange to consider how we all abhor that piece of Popery, as most injurious to God of all the rest, which resolves our faith into the authority of the Church; and yet that we do, for the generality of professors, content ourselves with the same kind of faith, only with this difference,—the Papists believe Scripture to be the Word of God, because their Church saith so, and we, *because our Church or our leaders say so.* Yea, and many ministers never yet gave their people better grounds, but tel! them that it is damnable to deny it, *but help*

them not to the antecedents of faith." Again, in the following page:—"It is to be understood, that *many thousands do profess Christianity*, and zealously hate the enemies thereof upon the same grounds, to the same end, and from the same inward corrupt principles, as the Jews did hate and kill Christ. It is the religion of the country, and every man is reproached that believes otherwise; they were born and brought up in this belief, and it hath increased in them upon the like occasions. Had they been born and bred in the religion of Mohammed, they would have been as zealous for him. The difference between him and the Mohammedan is more that he lives where better laws and religion dwell, than that he hath more knowledge or soundness of apprehension."

I need not, perhaps, remind you, that the last of these divines was, subsequently to the Restoration, chaplain to the king, and that, consequently, he may reasonably be supposed to have known, not merely the doctrines of his Church, but the state of its members.

I am sure, that the extracts from these two authors will abundantly demonstrate, and justify every assertion I have made. They bear strong testimony to what I advanced last evening, and proved from Dr. Beveridge: first, that it is the duty of each Protestant to satisfy himself of the grounds on which he receives and holds his faith: secondly, that the process whereby the first antecedents of faith are to be demonstrated is extremely difficult; that the attainment of the first step in the graduated reasoning necessary for establishing the Protestant rule, the fixing of its first link, is a complicated and uneasy operation: thirdly, that the majority of Protestants do live and remain Protestants without ever having gone through that course of conviction which their religion requires as absolutely necessary: in other words, are not brought, by the profession of their religion, to the embracing, practically, of the vital principle of their creed; nay, that many of them, as Dr. Beveridge has likewise observed, have no better grounds for being Christians than a Turk has for being a Mohammedan: fourthly, that the Protestant Church, for two hundred years, had done little or nothing towards establishing the first elementary principles of its belief upon any logical foundation.

Yet is all this inquiry but secondary or preliminary, when compared with the great investigation into the inspiration of the Scriptures. These Scriptures are inspired—that is the general, and, doubtless, the true belief. But, on what grounds does it

rest? Is it a matter of very simple demonstration, or one which proves itself almost intuitively? If you wish to satisfy yourselves on this point, take up the writings of authors who have treated of their inspiration, and you will be astonished, I am sure, to find how exceedingly difficult it is to bring such arguments as will satisfy an unbeliever. I will venture to say, that, having perused, with great attention, all that has fallen in my way, from Protestant writers, on this subject, I have hardly found one single argument advanced by them, that is not logically incorrect; so, that, if I had not higher grounds on which to rest my belief, they could not have led me to adopt it.

There are two classes of proofs generally advanced in favor of inspiration: internal arguments, drawn from the books themselves, and external ones, from the testimony of others. Now, regarding the first; it is not fair to consider the Sacred Volume, when under this examination, as forming an individual whole. Many of its books stand, necessarily, on different grounds from the rest. For instance, learned Protestant divines, especially on the Continent, have excluded from inspiration the writings of St. Luke and St. Mark, for this reason, that according to them, the only argument for inspiration in the New Testament, is, the promise of divine assistance given to the apostles. But these were not apostles, they were not present at the promise, and if you extend that privilege beyond those who were present, and to whom the promise was personally addressed, the rule will have no farther limit. If you admit disciples to have partaken of the privilege, on what ground is Barnabas excluded, and why is not his epistle held canonical? Therefore, if argument is drawn from the character of those who wrote, it is evident that they do not all rest upon the same proof.

Further, in examining the inspiration of the two Testaments, we stand upon different ground. For the Old, as having been received as inspired by our Saviour and his apostles, we have all the evidence which we require. But the New must be proved upon evidence, other than that of persons themselves inspired. For nowhere does our Saviour tell his apostles, that whatever they may write shall enjoy this privilege, nor do they anywhere claim it. We are, therefore, driven to the inquiry, was all that an apostle wrote necessarily inspired, or were only those books which we possess? If the former be the case, then we have surely lost many inspired works; for no one, I should think, can doubt, but that St. Paul wrote many more epistles or letters than have been preserved. If the latter, I would ask what internal

mark of inspiration can we discover in the third epistle of St. John, to show that the inspiration, *sometimes* accorded, must have been granted here? Is there any thing in that epistle which a good and virtuous pastor of the primitive ages might not have written? any thing superior in sentiment or doctrine, to what an Ignatius or a Polycarp might have indited?

It is unfair, then, in the extreme, as I before intimated, to consider the New Testament, and still more the entire Bible, as a whole; and to use *internal* arguments from one book to another; to assume, for instance, that the Song of Solomon has internal evidence of inspiration, because the book of Jeremiah, which is in the same volume, contains true prophecies; or that the Epistle to Philemon is necessarily inspired, because the Apocalypse by its side is a revelation. Yet, such is a common way of arguing. If internal evidence have to decide the question, show it me for each book in that sacred collection.

A popular opponent of the Catholic belief, on a late public occasion, summing up the arguments for the inspiration of Scripture, reduces the internal evidences to such heads as these: the *exalted character given to God, the description of human nature, the provision revealed in it to man after his fall, its morality, and its impartiality.** Now I would appeal to any man of unbiassed

* Rev. Mr. Tottenham. *Downside Discussion*. p. 144.—He divides the evidences into three classes,—the historical, of which something will be said in the text, the internal, and the experimental. This consists in the effects produced by the Bible in *changing the character of men*. Here is an error: for the Bible, as a book, has not that effect: but only the doctrines it contains. These, if preached, will be often more effectual in changing the lives of sinners, than if read. And as such conversions do not prove the preacher's sermon to be inspired, but only the doctrines which he teaches to be good, and, if you please, divine; so neither can a similar fact prove the Bible inspired, but merely its doctrines to be holy and salutary. The "Imitation of Christ" may be thus proved to be an inspired work. Mr. Tottenham quotes a passage from Abbot, to shew that, as a boy would know phosphorus, from his learning from good authority where it was bought, from its looking like phosphorus, and from its burning, so may we know the Scriptures to be inspired from similar arguments, but principally from the last. Here is the error repeated. A boy may have seen phosphorus a thousand times already: he has a term of comparison. We have no other Bible or inspired work, of which to say, our Bible is inspired, because it has the qualities of inspiration known to exist in that. But Protestants first, from the very look under examination, *assume* the characteristics of inspiration, and then apply them as evidence or tests to itself. What is meant by the "universal and irresistible power of the Bible, in changing the character and saving from suffering and sin," I do not understand. *Grace*, I should imagine, is the effectual agent in these acts; and how the Bible is proved to be *inspired*, by being a channel and instrument of grace, any more than an effectual sermon which brings the sinner to repentance, is not very clear. For I cannot for one moment suppose, that "power" is supposed by these writers to reside in the material book, or its letters; though there is some reason to fear that such image-worship is far from uncommon in this country.

judgment, whether these considerations would amount to a convincing argument, in the mind of one who had yet to believe the great, supernatural fact of a divine inspiration? For, observe the entire mass of proofs consists in an assumption of the disputed point. For, whether the morality of the Bible, and its doctrines regarding God and the soul, are proofs of inspiration, must depend upon our previous conviction that the systems of these things, there taught, are true. We have learnt from the Bible that man fell, we have imbibed from it the idea that the best and only remedy for his state was an atonement; and then we conclude that the Book must be inspired which gives so consistent a remedy, of whose aptitude or even possibility we never should or could have thought, but for the very book whose inspiration we are establishing.

But these proofs will be as nothing to the unbeliever, whom you wish to gain to a belief in this groundwork of the Protestant faith, and who knows or believes not that man is fallen, and needed a provision; or that the character of human nature is so much more correct in the Bible, as to have necessarily been dictated by God. The Hindoo brings every one of the same heads of evidence for his Vedas;* and the Mohammedan for his Koran.

But two classes of arguments this writer throws among the historical ones, which prove still further the weakness of his reasoning. The first is "*miracles*, which were wrought in attestation of their *doctrine*, by the writers of the books of Scripture."—Yes, in favor of the truth of *their doctrines*, but not of the inspirations of their writings: for the facts are perfectly distinct. Barnabas, too, wrought miracles in proof of the Christian *doctrine*; but not, therefore, has his epistle been considered canonical, even by those who think it genuine. Tertullian, Eusebius, and others, speak of miracles wrought by early Christians, to prove their faith; yet not, therefore, were their writings inspired.

His second proof is the prophecies recorded in Scripture. These may, indeed, prove any book to be inspired which is composed of them, but not, surely, any wherein they are merely recorded.

But no one, perhaps, has more completely betrayed the impossibility of proving the inspiration of Scripture upon mere

* See the Rev. A. Duff's "Church of Scotland's India Mission;" Edinburgh, 1835, p. 4.

Protestant grounds, than one who has been most laborious in the task. The Rev. Hartwell Horne has devoted a very long chapter of his "Introduction to the Critical Study of the Holy Scriptures," to the proofs of inspiration. Now mark the very heading of this chapter, or rather of its leading section. "The miracles *related* in the Old and New Testaments, are proofs that the Scriptures were given by inspiration of God." And the substance of the chapter corresponds with its title, for it is taken up with proving that the miracles *recorded* in the Gospel are true miracles.* True miracles! Yes, certainly, but there are true miracles related in the writings of Josephus, and in ecclesiastical history, yet are not they proved thereby to be inspired. The argument is treated by Horne, under a complicated variety of heads, so that it is not easy to discover the line of argument that conducts him through it; but the result amounts to this, that the Scripture is inspired, because true miracles are *recorded* in it.

I leave it to you to judge whether this reasoning be sound. Such recorded miracles might satisfy me, that those who wrote the records of them would tell the truth, if they should ever say that they were inspired; because God's working miracles to support their assertions would give the sanction of His authority to what they wrote. But show me where St. Matthew or St. Mark say that they have written their books under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; or by the command of God, or for any other than human purposes? Unless you can show this, any miraculous evidence of their character will prove that whatever they wrote is true; but not that it was written under the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

Precisely of a similar form is his argument drawn from prophecy; it is never attempted to be shown how the prophecies *recorded* in the New Testament, were intended to prove the inspiration of the books which contain them; how, for instance, the truth of our blessed Redeemer's prophecy, touching the destruction of Jerusalem, can demonstrate that the Gospel of St. Matthew must be inspired, because it relates it.†

If these methods of proving the inspiration fail, you must have recourse to outward authority—that is to say, to the testimony of man. But how is this to be obtained? Here again, considerable difficulties are introduced by writers on this subject. For there is a great difference between testimony to

external and that to internal facts. We require a very different chain of evidence to connect the last link with the conviction of our minds, in the one and in the other. I will explain my meaning. That St. Matthew, St. Mark, or St. John wrote the gospels which bear their names, is a public fact; one to which many persons might be qualified to speak, who either saw them engaged on them, or received them from them, or knew from public and uncontradicted belief, in or near their times, that they composed and published them. This historical evidence is considered sufficient for attesting the genuineness of any other author's writings; and I must consequently admit it here. Nay, were you to deny the genuineness of the sacred writings, because there is not evidence of them for twenty or thirty years after they were written, you must reject many ancient works, which were not published for many years after their authors' deaths; of which, yet, nobody doubts the genuineness.

But when you come to speak to me of what passed in the minds of the authors when they wrote these books, I must have some more immediate connecting link—I must have the earliest relater of the circumstance. Let us take a similar case: if I am told by history that such an architect erected a building among the ruins of Rome, and I find it recorded on the edifice, I do not doubt the fact: but if you tell me that he built it in consequence of a particular dream, which suggested the idea of its peculiar parts; in order to satisfy myself of the truth of this circumstance, I surely require a different character of testimony than will convince me of the overt, visible and notorious fact, that he merely raised it. I must trace it to some one who had it directly from him; for he alone can give testimony of the covert and inward fact. Thus, similarly, you may believe who wrote and published those books, upon the simple attestation of history; but when you come to establish their inspiration—the internal, secret, mysterious communication that passed between the innermost soul of the writer and the Holy Ghost, of which none other could be conscious, or have evidence save from them, you require the last link of evidence which completes the chain, and which can alone establish the fact.

The authority then, of history, or of ecclesiastical tradition, independently of the divine force allowed it by the Catholic, can prove no more than the genuineness or truth of the Scripture narrative; but, to be available as a proof of inspiration, it must carry us directly to the attestation of the only witnesses capable

of certifying the circumstance. It may be true that the Church, or body of Christians, in succeeding times, believed the books of the New Testament to be inspired. But if that Church and its traditions be not infallible, that belief goes no farther than a mere human or historical testimony: it can verify, therefore, no more than such testimony ever can; that is, outward and visible facts; such as the publication, and, consequently, the legitimacy of a work. The only way in which it can attest the interior acts which accompanied its compilation, is by preserving the assurances of those who, besides God, could alone be witnesses to them. Now, ecclesiastical history has not preserved to us this important testimony; for nowhere have we it recorded of any of these writers, that he asserted his own inspiration. And thus, by rejecting tradition as an infallible authority, is the only basis for the inspiration of Scripture cut away.

Hitherto, my brethren, of what have I been treating? Why, of nothing more than the preliminaries requisite to commence the study of the Protestant rule of faith. I have merely shown that the obstacles and difficulties to receiving the Bible as the word of God, are numerous and complicated; and yet, if it is the duty of every Protestant to believe all that he professes, *because* he has sought and discovered it in the word of God; if, consequently, it is his duty to be satisfied only on his own evidence, as the divines of his Church have stated; if, to attain this conviction, it is necessary for him to go through a long and painful course of learned disquisitions; and if, after all these have been encountered, he cannot come to a satisfactory demonstration of the most important point of inspiration,—I ask you, can the rule, in the very approach to which you must pass through such a labyrinth of difficulties, be that which God has given as a guide to the poorest, the most illiterate, and simplest of his creatures?

II. Such, then, is merely the difficulty of obtaining possession of the rule; but when it has been obtained—(I come now to speak of the application)—is it not surrounded with equal, or even greater difficulties than these? We are to suppose that God gave his Holy Word to be the only rule of faith to all men. It must be a rule, therefore, easy to be procured, and to be held. God himself must have made the necessary provision, that all men should have it, and be able to apply it. What then does he do? He gives us a large volume written in two languages; the chief portion in one known to a small and limited country of the world. He allows that speech to become a dead language, so that countless difficulties and obscurities should spring up re-

garding the meaning of innumerable passages. The other portion he gives in a language spoken by a larger body of mankind, but still by a very small proportion, considering the extent of those to whom the blessings of Christianity were intended to be communicated; and we are to suppose that he gives this book as a satisfactory and sufficient rule of faith.

In the first place, then, we must naturally understand that it is to be translated into every language, that so all men may have access to it: in the second place, it must be so distributed, that all may have possession of it; and, in the third place, it must be so easy, that all men may use it. Are these the characteristics of this rule?

1. Suppose it to be the only rule of all who believe in Christ, are you aware of the difficulty of undertaking a translation of it? Whenever the attempt has been made in modern times, in the first instance, it has generally failed; and even after many repeated attempts, it has proved unsatisfactory. Had I time, or were it necessary, I could show you, from various Reports of the Bible Society, and from the acknowledgment of its members, that many versions, after having been diffused among the natives of countries to be converted, have been necessarily withdrawn, on account of the absurdities, impieties, and innumerable errors which they contained. And this is the rule that has been put into the hands of men! But look to the history of even more celebrated translations, such as are put forth by authority. I speak not of those early versions which were made when the knowledge of the facts and circumstances was fresh, and when those who wrote, better understood the original languages. But look at any modern version, such as that authorized in these realms. Read the account of how often it was corrected; what combinations of able and learned men it required to bring it to a tolerable degree of accuracy. Its worth, after all, as a rule, must depend upon the skill and fitness of individuals for the task of translating; and can we reasonably suppose that the providence of God would stake the whole usefulness and value of His rule upon the private or particular abilities of man?

2. Secondly, what are the difficulties attending its diffusion? Oh, my brethren! could you look at this matter in another age from the present, you might better understand it. You fancy, possibly, that because Bibles are now multiplied by thousands, and by millions, their application as a rule is obvious and easy; that because there is one nation or the globe possessed of immense wealth, and mighty empire. And having ships that fre-

quent the farthest bounds of earth—that because there are men willing to devote their time, and wealth, and zeal to the publication and diffusion of these books—that because, in this country, and at the present time, a combination of political, commercial, and literary circumstances facilitates this distribution, therefore the rule is sufficiently accessible to all mankind. But God does not plan the rule of his faith in accordance with the possible literary or commercial prosperity of any country; nor so construct the groundwork of his truth as to depend upon the mechanical inventions of man. The Gospel's being the rule of faith, can have no connection with the circumstance, that the press, by the aid of the strongest mechanical power applied to it, has now produced the Bible in measureless abundance. God could not mean, that, for 1,400 years, man should be without a religious guide; or that he should have to wait until human genius had given efficacy to one by its discoveries and inventions. Such cannot be the qualities or conditions of the rule. We must look for it as one for all times, and for all places; as something coming into operation so soon as delivered, and destined to last until the end of time. We cannot therefore admit, as the only necessary rule of faith, that which depends for its adoption on the accidental instrumentality of man, and requires, essentially, his unprescribed co-operation.

For I think that, on reflection, any unprejudiced mind will rather wonder how, in the Word of God, there should have been no provision made for this important condition. Why do we never find any precept given to the apostles to disseminate the Scriptures, after having them translated into all languages? How comes it, that no intimation is ever given therein of the duty of ministers to provide copies of the sacred volume for those whom they are bound to instruct? If this dissemination of the written word was and is an essential part of Christianity, and if in scripture alone is to be found the rule and criterion of all that is essential, how comes this important provision to be there omitted? Nay, as our acquaintance with history proves to us the utter impossibility of the Bible's being extensively circulated without the aid of the press, why was not its invention provided for, as the necessary instrument for arriving at the rule and groundwork of faith? Surely the Bible Society is no part of the economy and machinery of Christianity; and yet, without it, the Scriptures could not have been diffused, to the extent which we have witnessed in modern times.

3 This difficulty of disseminating the supposed rule of faith,

is much exceeded by that of understanding it. For to be the rule of faith, it cannot be sufficient that men should possess and read it; but they must surely be able to comprehend it. In fact, who ever heard of the propriety or wisdom of placing in men's hands a code, or rule, which it was impossible for the greater portion of them to comprehend?

As I perceive that I have already detained you much beyond what the proportion of my subject already discussed might seem to warrant, I shall be obliged to condense, considerably, what remains of my discourse; and I cannot dwell at length upon the consideration of much that is important; such as the examination of those serious difficulties which prevent ordinary readers from understanding even the easier parts of Scripture. For I will not speak of sublimer passages; of those divine Psalms, which are acknowledged to be lyric poetry of the highest order—a class of writing difficult to most readers in their own language, often almost unintelligible in the profane authors of antiquity, and still more so in the Scriptures, from the greater boldness of the figures, and the greater conciseness of the speech. I will not dwell upon the mysterious imagery of the prophets' visions, and the obscure language in which it is recorded. But I might select ordinary passages of Scripture, and show you the difficulties that exist in the way of arriving at a proper conception, or any understanding, thereof. And this might still be farther confirmed, by stating the elaborate commentaries, and the immense mass of conflicting opinions of Protestant expositors, when attempting to clear up the obscurity of passages, which many of my hearers have, perhaps, read again and again, without perceiving that they contained a difficulty. And this has happened, not because there was no difficulty, but because they looked with a superficial eye on the words of the text, so as best to accommodate them to preconceived opinions or else because they wanted acuteness sufficient even to discover a real difficulty where it exists. But this is a subject on which I need not touch. It is sufficient to look over the collections of commentators, to count the number of their volumes, and measure the bulk of matter written on almost every verse of Scripture, to satisfy yourselves that it is not so easy a book.

Such, therefore, are the difficulties regarding the application of this rule: a difficulty of procuring and preserving the proper sense of the original by correct translations; a difficulty of bringing this translation within the reach of all; a difficulty, not to say an impossibility, of enabling all to understand it.

III. I have thus treated of the grounds of the rule, and of its application. I shall now say a few words regarding its end. What is the end to be attained by the use of any rule! Uniformity of thought and action, in those matters which it regulates. What is the end of any law, but that all men should know what their conduct ought to be in any given case, and what will be the result and consequence, good or evil, of a different course? Of what use is a code of regulations drawn up by any body or society, but that all its members should act in the same manner, and so procure that union which is the necessary basis and bond of every society? And if God has given us a rule, or code of principles, is it not that all should be brought to know the same duties, and to practise the same virtues? Is it not that all should be brought to entertain the same faith?

And has this rule of faith proved equal to that only end? Most avowedly not. It is not necessary to go far from the ground on which I am standing, to see many places of worship maintaining conflicting doctrines, and all professing to be taught on the authority of that one book. Here one man will denounce, as contrary to the Christian faith, the doctrines of Calvinism; there, another, with equal zeal, upholds them as the most essential groundwork of Christianity. In one, you will hear the divinity of the Son of God, and the sublime mystery of the Trinity, decried as a human device; and in another, you will hear a creed recited, wherein all those who deny those doctrines are condemned to eternal loss. And yet all hold the same book in their hands, and quote almost the same passages, while they profess an almost endless variety of conflicting and contradictory doctrines.

And is not this result, this solution of the problem, a satisfactory evidence of the insufficiency of the proposed rule? Suppose that a law were passed, and that, as we have often seen within the last few years in these realms, it were found, that, in one part of the country, the magistrates, with it in their hands, were led to one course of proceeding, and, in another, to an opposite line, so that contradictions should arise, and men know not how to act upon it; would it not be considered inadequate for its purposes; and would not a new one be brought in to correct and amend that which had been found deficient? And why? Because a law is, in every system of jurisprudence, considered inadequate to its end, if it do not bring men to uniformity of action. And this, by analogy, being the end of a rule of faith,

to bring men to a uniformity of faith, that rule must be insufficient that does not answer such a purpose.

Thus much may suffice regarding the Protestant grounds of faith, considered merely in themselves. I have endeavored to show you the necessity of every Protestant satisfying himself, not only of the truth of his doctrine, but of the very rule on which he bases it; and I have exposed to you not only the difficulty, but the impossibility, on his principles, of arriving at a clear definition of this rule; then, the difficulty which accompanies its application, and its insufficiency for its end.

As I have spoken so much of the Word of God, and as I fear that some present, misled, perhaps, by feelings infused into them by education, may have been tempted to think that we, universally, and myself in particular, speak with unbecoming disparagement thereof, I wish, before closing this portion of my subject, to state what is the practice and belief of Catholics regarding the Scriptures.

We are told that the Catholic loves not the Scriptures; that his Church esteems not the Word of God; that it wishes to suppress it, to put the light of God under a bushel, and so extinguish it. The Catholic Church not love and esteem the word of God! Is there any other Church that places a heavier stake on the authority of the Scriptures, than the Catholic? Is there any other Church that pretends to base so much of rule over men on the words of that book? Is there any one, consequently, that has a greater interest in maintaining, preserving, and exhibiting that Word? For those who have been educated in that religion know, that when the Church claims authority, it is on the Holy Scriptures that she grounds it; and is not this giving it a weighty importance beyond what any other Church will attempt? And not only has she ever loved and cherished it, but she has been jealous of its honor and preservation, so as no other religion can pretend to boast. Will you say that a mother hath not loved her child, who has warmed and nursed it in her bosom for years, when nothing else would have saved it from perishing—who has spent her blood and her strength in defending and rescuing it from the attempts of foes and rivals on its life; who has doated on it till scoffed at by others; lavished treasures on its embellishment, and done whatever her means would allow to make it seem beautiful, and lovely, and estimable in the eyes of men? For, if you would say this, then may you also say, that the Church hath not cherished and esteemed the Word of God.

For, first, she caught up its different fragments and portions,

as they proceeded from the inspired writers, and united them together. To those who pretend that the Catholic Church extended not so far back, I will say, that it was the Catholic principle of unity which, alone, could have enabled Churches to communicate to one another the respective books and letters addressed to them by the apostles; and it was only on the communication of the authority which their testimony gave, that the canon of Scripture was framed. Did she not afterwards keep men by hundreds, and thousands, employed in nothing else than in transcribing the Holy Word of God; ay, in letters of gold, and upon parchment of purple, to show her respect and veneration for it? Has she not commanded it to be studied in every religious house, in every university, in every ecclesiastical college, and expounded to the faithful in every place, and at all times? Has she not produced, in every age, learned and holy men, who have dedicated themselves to its illustration by erudite commentaries, and popular expositions? Were there not, in what are called the darkest ages, men like Alcuin and Lanfranc, who devoted much of their lives to the detection of such errors as had crept into it by accident? And is it not to all this fostering care that we are indebted that the Word of God now exists? And while we have copies of it so splendid as to attest the immense labor devoted to their production, we have others in the cheapest and most portable form that could be procured from the pen, to show that they were in the hands of all who could possibly, under such circumstances, be able to obtain them. But every copy was the work of the penman, and could not be so easily produced, nor so widely circulated.

But I say, that the Catholic Church has been always foremost, not only in the task of translating the Scriptures, but also in placing it in the hands of the faithful. It is but a few months since I was, I may not say shocked, but truly and deeply grieved, to see the whole country roused, by the trumpet of bigotry, to celebrate what was called the Jubilee of the Reformation! and that was dated from what was announced as the first complete translation of the Bible into English.* I was grieved, I say, to see, in the first instance, that any Church could be so deluded as to consider a duration of three hundred years a motive for triumph—that any establishment purporting to be based upon the Rock of Ages, and to exist by the unalterable decrees of Divine

* This alludes to the tercentenary commemoration of the Reformation, celebrated on the 4th of October, 1835.

Providence, professing to hold the purest and most enduring doctrines, should think three hundred years worthy to be made a date of universal rejoicing, while we can count hundreds upon hundreds; nay, the two-thousandth year shall come without our signalizing it in any manner, save by the discharge of our duty to give daily praise and thanks to the Almighty. In the second place, I was grieved to think, that all this excitement should have been created—I will not say, by falsehood, but by misapprehension; that an attempt should have been made to bring crowds together, to commemorate an event as giving commencement to a certain period, which yet had no connection with it.

For it is well known, or ought to have been known, to those who raised this cry, that long before any Protestant version existed in any language in Europe, there were, not one, or two, or five, or ten, but almost innumerable translations, not only in manuscript, but in print, for the use of the faithful, in the short interval between the invention of printing and the rise of Protestantism. And as I know that a different opinion prevails, even among some Catholics, on this point, I will give a few particulars, that so you may be on your guard against similar misconceptions.

Let us take Germany as an instance. A clergyman, who was among the most active promoters of the late tercentenary festival, speaks of Luther's version as the first published in Germany. He simply says, that "so early as the year 1466, a German translation from the Latin Vulgate, was printed, the author of which is unknown. Scarcely, however, had the Reformation commenced, when Luther meditated a new version."* And a little later, he observes, "that besides the versions made by Protestants, there are also translations made by Romish divines, some of which appeared *almost* as early as that of Luther."† Now, how accurate all this is, you shall see, from the enumeration which I will give you of the Catholic translations, and their editions made before that of Luther, which was begun in 1523, but not completed until eleven years afterwards.

In the first place, there is a copy yet extant of a printed version so old as to have no date; for the first printed books had

* Horne, vol. ii., Appendix, p. 88.

† P. 91, Mr. Horne adds, that "the Romanists, in Germany have evinced an ardent desire for the Scriptures, notwithstanding the fulminations of the Papal See against them." The inaccuracy of this writer, in all that concerns Catholics, is truly astonishing. Why did he not tell us when these fulminations were pronounced?

neither a date nor name of place. In the second place, a Catholic version was printed by Fust, in 1472, nearly sixty years before the completion of Luther's version. Another had appeared as early as 1467; a fourth was published in 1472; and a fifth in 1473. At Nuremberg, there was a version published in 1477, and republished *three times more*, before Luther's appeared. There appeared, at Augsburg, another in the same year, which went through eight editions before that of Luther. At Nuremberg, one was published, by Koburg, in 1483, and in 1488; and at Augsburg, one appeared in 1518, which was republished in 1524, about the same time that Luther was going on with his; and down to the present time, the editions of this version have been almost countless.

In Spain, a version appeared, in 1478, before Luther was thought of, and almost before he was born. In Italy, the country most peculiarly under the sway of Papal dominion, the Scriptures were translated into Italian, by Malermi, at Venice, in 1471; and this version was republished seventeen times before the conclusion of that century, and twenty-three years before that of Luther appeared. A second version of parts of Scripture was published in 1472; a third at Rome, in 1471; a fourth by Bruccioli, at Venice, in 1532; and a corrected edition, by Marmochini, in 1538, two years after Luther had completed his. And every one of these came out, not only with the approbation of the ordinary authorities, but with that of the Inquisition, which approved of their being published, distributed, and promulgated.*

In France, a translation was published, in 1478; another, by Menand, in 1484; another, by Guiars de Moulins, in 1487; which may rather be called a History of the Bible; and, finally, another, by Jacques le Fevre, in 1512, often reprinted.

In the Belgian language, a version was published at Cologne, in 1475, which, before 1488, had been republished three times. A second appeared in 1518.

There was also a Bohemian translation, published in 1488, thrice reprinted before Luther's; not to speak of the Polish and Oriental versions. In our own country it is well known that there were versions long before that of Tyndal or of Wickliffe.

* I remember, some years ago, reading in an English Review that my learned and amiable relative, Don Tomas Gonzales de Carvajal, had met with difficulties from the Inquisition about the publication of his metrical version of the poetical books of Scripture. I believe the Inquisition did not exist at that time; but at any rate, the entire statement was without foundation.

Sir Thomas More has observed, that "the hole Byble, was, long before his (Wickliffe's) dayes, by vertuous and wel lerned men, translated into the English tong, and by good and godly people, with devotion and soberness, wel and reverently red."* And if it be said that the Scriptures were not disseminated, it was because the want of printing and of a general literary education prevented this.

I have mentioned these facts, to show how unjust is the assertion, that the spread of the Reformation gave rise to Scriptural translations,—how unjust it is to say that the Church has withheld the Bible from the people. But mark the change. The Scriptures had been diffused among the faithful, and would have so continued, had not dangerous doctrines sprung up, which taught that men should throw aside all authority, and each one judge for himself in religion; a system which we have seen fraught with such dreadful difficulties, that it is no wonder that it should have been made matter of discipline, to check, for a time, its perilous diffusion. Sir Thomas More truly observes, that, if we look at the act of Parliament on this subject, we shall find, that it was not any Church authority, but the civil government which first interfered. Because it was when the Scriptures had begun more to be read, from the times of the Waldenses and Wickliffe, that the doctrine was broached that the civil magistrate lost all his authority when he committed crime, and that no man had a right to possess jurisdiction, civil or ecclesiastical, if he was in a state of sin. When these doctrines had raised the arm of fanatics against social order, the civil authority called in the aid of the Church; although, in the first instance, the Church did not prohibit the diffusion of the Scriptures.

Those, therefore, who say that the Reformers were the first to communicate the Scriptures, are evidently in error; for they had previously been spread in the Catholic Church, which, subject to the supervision of its pastors, permitted almost, I might say quite, their indiscriminate perusal.

Thus much may suffice for the present. I have only as yet kept you amidst the outworks.—I have not yet brought you within the precincts, of the inquiry. In treating of the Protestant rule of faith, I have refrained from alluding to the decision of Scripture itself. As yet, I have handled it merely as a question of moral and philosophical discussion. I have simply deduced, from the nature of the rule itself, how far it can be considered

* A "dialogue concernynge heresyes." B. iii. c. 14, p. 232.

satisfactory. I have arrayed its difficulties before you, and I have shown that it requires a strong shelter under divine warrant and sanction to justify the institution of so complicated and difficult a rule. Now, whether there be that divine authority, I have not yet examined; for I have not touched upon the passages adduced, to prove that the Scripture is a satisfactory rule of faith. That I reserve for future discourses; when I hope I shall be able to meet, before you, all the arguments that are to be drawn from the Word of God. Next Friday, I will pass to the positive portion of my theme. Having first excluded, or partially removed, the system of others, I will proceed to what I consider the true and legitimate mode of argument on this subject; that is to say, to proving what we believe; and when you can compare the two systems together, you will judge between them which is the institution of God.

You may, perhaps, consider that system which I have already described, (and upon which, more has yet to be said,) as at first sight appearing regular, orderly, and beautiful. It may be compared to a handsome, modern edifice, which strikes you when passing along the high-road, and which, only judging of it, as you hasten on, by the measure of its outward proportions, by the artful scale on which it has been constructed, and the apparent uniformity of all its parts, has seemed to you to possess within, a proportionable fitness and beauty and convenience; but which, when you have entered in, as I have partly led you this day, you discover to be composed of dark and tortuous passages, and of strait and inharmonious, and ill-contrived apartments, which give no joy or comfort to those who therein dwell. Now from this, I will lead you to a far more beautiful fabric, of which the other will seem to be but a mean copy, as though its architect had seen the exterior of ours, but had not been allowed the privilege of entering. It will appear at first to you, as if upon it there were time-stains, and other traces of the course of centuries over its surface; but, on a nearer approach, even these will be respected, as venerable signs of sacred antiquity. But, when you have looked within, you will see, through the whole of the edifice, beauty, and symmetry, and just proportion, and grandeur, in every part; where all the members of the goodly building are harmoniously composed into one beautiful whole, and all its chambers adorned with whatever can rejoice the heart of man and gladden his existence. Then, I am sure, you will acknowledge, that if that which you have just seen was but the work of man, this, which you will have thoroughly

examined, was the erection of God. And I trust that you will not so content yourselves with looking in—that you will not be satisfied with taking a cursory glance at all the beauties and perfections of the edifice; but that, using the lights which it is given to fallen man to have, you will, under my humble guidance, enter therein: that so, many, who now stand without, may come therein, to abide with the children of Christ, and to sit around that banquet of heavenly gifts which there only is to be enjoyed on earth, as an earnest of what God has prepared in heaven.

LECTURE THE THIRD.

EXPOSITION OF THE CATHOLIC RULE OF FAITH.

1 PETER, iii. 15.

"Sanctify the Lord Jesus Christ in your hearts; being ready always to satisfy any one that asketh you the reason of the hope that is in you."

In my last discourse, I was principally occupied with the less pleasing task of examining and confuting the opinions of others. I endeavored, with the utmost impartiality, to analyze the principle of belief adopted by those religions which have rejected ours; and, without any reference to express authority, by simply tracing it to its simple elements, I attempted to show you that it was fraught with so many difficulties, as absolutely to render it in practice inapplicable, and void of fruit. For, while it supposes, on the one hand, the obligation of each individual to examine for himself the word of God, and draw thence the doctrines which he believes, as therein contained; it, on the other hand, necessarily supposes a train of difficult, learned, and often abstruse inquiry, to which very few, comparatively, can be equal.

I come now to the more agreeable duty of explaining to you the faith which we hold: and I shall endeavor to proceed precisely in the same manner as I did at our last meeting. I will at present content myself with giving you the outline of our belief; showing, as I proceed, how simple and obvious is the whole process of our reasoning,—such, indeed, as must at once satisfy the most accurate and logical inquirer; and yet, at the same time, be within the reach of the most illiterate capacity. I will endeavor, also, to point out the beautiful harmony of all its parts, and the striking way in which the adoption of such a rule must influence, not only the whole basis and nature of the demonstration, but also the construction of perfect Christianity.

We are told, in the 31st chapter of Deuteronomy, how, when Moses had completed the law of God, and had written it in a book, he gave it to the Levites who bare the Ark of the Lord, and commanded that it should be placed beside the Ark of the Covenant, within the Tabernacle, as a testimony against Israel.

But that was not the only precious thing which received so distinguished an honor. For we read how, on a certain occasion,* when many would have disputed the supreme priesthood of Aaron's line, and, jealous of the authority vested in him as the priest appointed of God, would have claimed a share in his dignity, the Almighty commanded Moses to give a rod unto each of the tribes, whereon the name of its head was written; and all were placed in the presence of the Lord; and on the next morning, it was found that the rod of Aaron had blossomed, and brought forth fruit. And then God commanded this rod, which was the emblem of authority, and a witness that he had confided the spiritual rule and the teaching of the people to one line, to be also deposited and kept in the same place, as a testimony in like manner to the people of Israel. And even so, on another occasion, Moses commanded Aaron to take a certain portion of the manna, of the holy and spiritual food sent down from the clouds to feed the people of Israel; and having put it into a vessel, he treated it likewise with the same distinction, and placed it to stand in the Sanctuary, before the Mercy-seat of God.†

Now, my brethren, all these are perfectly symbolical of the elements, which the Catholic supposes to enter into the composition of the groundwork of his faith. For, first, above all, he reveres and values the Sacred Volume revealed by God, which he places as the foundation-stone of his faith, in the holiest of His temple. But beside, it is also the rod of the children of Aaron, the sceptre of power and authority, the badge of dignity and command which God hath given to the rulers and pastors of the Church; and in this also he recognises the honorable right to claim a place beside the other in the Sanctuary, although with such distinctions as I shall just now explain. Then, in the third place, he believes also, that a necessary and important ingredient in the formation of individual faith, is the strengthening and life-giving grace which God sends down into the soul, which infuses faith as a virtue into the heart, ready to be exercised the moment its object is properly placed before it. And such is the threefold composition of the provision made by God for the acceptance of his holy religion: a divine revelation, having its essential basis in his written word; an unfailing authority to preserve, propose, and explain it; and an inward aid to receive and embrace it. And the emblems of these, as was done

* Numb. xvii.

† Exod. xvi. 33.

of old, we carefully cherish in the tabernacle of God with men, which is his Church.

What, then, my brethren, is the rule of faith which our Church admits? The Word of God—the Word of God alone and exclusively; but here comes the great trenching difference between ourselves and others, in the inquiry, what is the extent of God's Holy Word? The Churches which separated from us at the time of the Reformation, separated from us, I may say, upon this principle,—that the Catholic Church had introduced another ground, beside the Word of God, into the principle of its religion; that it admitted the traditions of man, and had given to them the title, the name, and dignity of God's word. It is, therefore, necessary for me to propose a few simple explanatory distinctions. You often hear of Catholics admitting *tradition*—sometimes of their receiving what they call the *unwritten word of God*. Perhaps you have not a clear apprehension of these two terms. Then, besides them, you will sometimes hear of the *power* of the Church to *make decrees* of dogma, or of the *authority* of General Councils, or of the Universal Church, or of the Pope, to *define matters of faith*, with a number of other terms, often vaguely, and sometimes equivocally used. The meaning of all these phrases, to the reasonable and instructed Catholic, is sufficiently obvious; but they should be used with great caution, and accurately defined, when we explain our doctrines to persons not equally competent to understand them. In the first place, then, as it has pleased God to order things, the Catholic has no need of any other groundwork of his faith beyond the written word of God. For it has pleased Him (though he might have otherwise ordered it) to give us in his Holy Scriptures sufficient evidence of that authority which he has bestowed upon his Church. This reasoning may be thus illustrated, as we do not allow of any doctrine which is not contained and rooted in Christ Jesus incarnate, the Word of God, and Eternal Wisdom of the Father, and yet we admit other doctrines, only remotely connected with him, based only on him, and less directly referable to him,—for no doctrine can have any force except inasmuch as it rests on his authority; so likewise if the Church claims authority to define articles of faith, and to instruct her children what they must believe, you must not for one moment think that authority, and the sanction for that power, she conceives herself to derive from the clear, express, and explicit words of Scripture. Thus, it may be truly said, that whatever is believed by the Catholic, although not positively expressed in the *written word of God*, is

believed, because the principle adopted by him is there expressly revealed.

By the *unwritten* word of God, we mean a body of doctrines, which, in consequence of express declarations in the *written* word, we believe not to have been committed in the first instance to writing, but delivered by Christ to his apostles, and by the apostles to their successors. We believe that no new doctrine can be introduced into the Church, but that every doctrine which we hold, has existed, and been taught in it ever since the time of the apostles; having been handed down by them to their successors, under the only guarantee on which we receive doctrines from the Church, that is, Christ's promises to abide with it for ever, to assist, direct, and instruct it, and always teach in and through it. So that, while giving our implicit credit, and trusting our judgment to it, we are believing, and trusting to the express teaching and sanction of Christ himself.

Tradition, therefore, my brethren, or the doctrines delivered down, and the *unwritten word* of God, are one and the same thing. But it must not be thought, that Catholics conceive there is a certain mass of vague and floating opinions, which may, at the option of the Pope, or of a General Council, or of the whole Church, be turned into Articles of Faith. Neither is it implied by the term *unwritten word*, that these Articles of Faith or traditions are nowhere recorded. Because, on the contrary, suppose a difficulty to arise regarding any doctrine—so that men should differ, and not know what precisely to believe, and that the Church thought it prudent or necessary to define what is to be held; the method pursued would be to examine most accurately the writings of the Fathers of the Church, to ascertain what, in different countries and in different ages, was by them held; and then, collecting the suffrages of all the world and of all times—not indeed to create a new Article of Faith—but to define what has always been the Faith of the Catholic Church. It is conducted, in every instance, as a matter of historical inquiry, and all human prudence is used to arrive at a judicious decision. But when the Church is assembled for this solemn purpose, in consequence of those promises of Christ, which I shall develop at full length hereafter, we believe it impossible that the decrees which she issues can be false or incorrect; because Christ's promises would fail and be made void, should the Church be allowed to fall into error.

Thus, then, we allow of no authority but the Word of God, written or unwritten: and maintain that the control so neces-

sary over the latter, exists in its depository,—that is, in the Church of Christ, which has been appointed by God to take charge of, and keep safe those doctrines committed to her from the beginning, to be taught, at all times, to all nations. Now, therefore, proceeding on the same plan which I followed in analyzing and testing the first principle or rule of Faith professed by others, I will briefly explain what is the ground of ours, what its application, and what its end; and you will, I trust, see the consistency of the whole reasoning from its beginning to its close, and its adaptation for the purpose for which any rule must be given.

1. In the first place, as to the *ground* of this rule. By this term I do not mean the arguments whereby it is supported; because, these must form the subject of two or three probably lengthy discourses. At present I mean to speak of the train of reasoning, by which we arrive at the individual possession of this principle. Let us therefore, suppose that, not content with the more compendious method whereby God brought us, through baptism and our early instruction, into the possession of the Faith, we are disposed to investigate the authority on which it rests; we begin naturally with Scripture—we take up the Gospels, and submit them to examination. We abstract, for a moment, from our belief in their inspiration and divine authority—we look at them simply as historical works, intended for our information, writings from which we are anxious to gather truths useful for our instruction. We find, in the first place, that to these works, whether considered in their substance or their form, are attached all those motives of human credibility which we can possibly require;—that there is, throughout them, an absence of every element which could suggest the suspicion that there has been either a desire to deceive, or a possibility of having been mistaken. For, we find a body of external testimony sufficient to satisfy us that these are documents produced at the time when they profess to have been written, and that those persons were their authors whose names they bear. And as these were eye-witnesses of what they relate, and give us, in their lives and characters, the strongest security of their veracity, we conclude all that they have recorded to be certain and true. We thus arrive at the discovery, that besides their mere narrative, they unfold to us a system of religion, preached by One who wrought the most stupendous miracles to establish and confirm the divinity of his mission. In other words, we are led by the simple principle of human investigation to an acknow-

ledgment of the authority of Christ to teach, as one who came from God: and we are thus led to the necessity of yielding implicit credence to whatever we find Him to have taught. So far, the investigation, being one of outward and visible facts, cannot require any thing more than simple historical or human evidence.

Having once thus established the divine authority of Christ, we naturally inquire, what is it that Christ taught? and we find that he was not contented merely with teaching certain general principles of morality; that he was not satisfied with unfolding to mankind doctrines such as none before him had attempted to teach, and thereby making man acquainted with his own fallen nature, and with his future destiny; but that, moreover, he took means to preserve those doctrinal communications to mankind. We find it, obviously, his intention, that the system which he established should be beneficial, not only to those who lived in his own days, and heard his words, but to the entire world, until the end of time; that he intended his religion to be something permanent, something commensurate with the existence of those wants of humanity which he came to relieve: and, consequently, we naturally ask, in what way the obligations which he came to enforce, and the truths which he suffered to seal, were to be preserved, and what the place wherein they were to be deposited? If they were to be perpetual, proper provision must have been made for their perpetuation.

Now, the Catholic falls in with a number of very strong passages in which our blessed Saviour, not content with promising a continuance of his doctrines, that is to say, the continued obligation of faith upon men, also pledges himself for their actual preservation among them. He selects a certain body of men: he invests them, not merely with great authority, but with power equal to his own; he makes them a promise of remaining with them, and teaching among them, even to the end of time; and thus, once again, the inquirer naturally concludes, that there must for ever have existed, and that there must actually exist, a corresponding institution for the preservation of those doctrines, and the perpetuation of those blessings which our Saviour thus communicated.

Proceeding thus by mere historical reasoning, such as would guide an infidel to believe in Christ's superior mission, he comes, from the word of Christ, whom those historical motives oblige him to believe, to acknowledge the existence of a body, depository of doctrines which he came to establish among men. This succession and body of persons constituted to preserve those doc-

trines of faith, appointed as the successors of the apostles, having the guarantee of Christ teaching among them for ever—is what he calls the Church. He is in possession, from that moment, of an assurance of divine authority, and, in the whole remaining part of the investigation, has no need to turn back by calling in once more the evidence of man. For, from the moment he is satisfied that Christ has appointed a succession of men whose province it is, by aid of a supernatural assistance, to preserve, inviolable, those doctrines which God has delivered—from that moment, whatever these men teach is invested with that divine authority which he had found in Christ, through the evidence of his miracles. This body, so constituted, immediately takes on itself the office of teaching, and informs him that the sacred volume, which he had been hitherto treating as a mere history—that the document which he had been perusing solely with a deep and solemn interest, is a book which commands a much greater degree of respect and attention than any human motives could possibly bestow. For now the Church stands forth with that authority wherewith she is invested by Christ—and proclaims: “Under that guarantee of divine assistance which the words of Christ, in whom you believe, have given me, I pronounce that this book contains the revealed word of God, and is inspired by the Holy Spirit, and that it contains all that has a right to enter into the sacred collection.” And thus the Catholic at length arrives, on the authority of the Church, at these two important doctrines of the canon and the inspiration of Scripture, which I endeavored to show, at our last meeting, it was almost, if not quite, impossible, to reach by any course of ordinary human investigation.

But some, perhaps, will say, “these are natural, and, consequently, insufficient testimonies; you believe that the Scripture first teaches you the Church, and then that the Church teaches you the Scripture.”

To this I might reply, that there is a fallacy in the very reasoning. When an ambassador presents himself before a sovereign, he is asked, where are his credentials? He presents them, and on the strength of them is acknowledged as an ambassador; so that he himself first presents that document, whereby alone his mission and authority are subsequently established. Again, on whose authority do you receive the laws of your country? On that of the legislature, which sanctions and presents them to you. And whence does that legislature derive its jurisdiction and power to make those laws? Why, from that very code, from those very statutes which it sanctions. In either of

these cases there is no fallacy of reasoning, no vicious circle, as it is called. How, then, can Catholics be charged, as they are, by Burnet and others, with this defect in their similar reasoning?

But, in fact, the argument is falsely stated. We do not believe the Church on the authority of Scripture, properly so called; we believe it on the authority of *Christ*; and if his commands in her regard, were recorded in any other book which we felt ourselves bound to believe, although uninspired, we should receive them, and, consequently, the authority of the Church, equally as now. We consider the Scriptures, therefore, in the first instance, as a book manifesting to us One furnished with divine authority to lay down the law; we take it in this view, and examine what he tells us; and we discover that, supported by all the evidence of his divine mission, he has appointed this authority to teach; and then, that authority not merely advises, but obliges us, by that power which Christ has invested in it, to receive this sacred book as his inspired word.

Some may, perhaps, think, that a similar line of reasoning would, with a slight variation, be applicable to the demonstration of the other rule of faith. To a certain point we may both go, step by step, through the same process. We both take up this sacred volume, on human and historical testimony, and we receive all that Christ has in it taught us. So far we march together, and then we diverge. We take for our guide those texts which appoint the Church to teach; the others take the proposition, that the Bible is to be the rule of faith.

Now, my brethren, I beg your impartial attention while I explain to you the difference between the two courses. In the first place, when we have received the Scriptures, according to the Catholic doctrine, we not only receive the one class of passages, but also the other, to its fullest extent; because, whatever argument will prove that the Scripture must be absolutely taken as the rule of faith, that argument the Catholic will receive, and receive with gratitude. For, while he admits the authority of the Church to define what is undoubtedly the written word of God, he receives this as his rule, and is as anxious to uphold it as the follower of any other religion can be. But, on the other hand, while he willingly admits the texts which prove the Scriptures to be the rule of faith, he has passages which give authority to a living power to teach; and all these must be rejected, or otherwise explained by those who maintain the exclusiveness of Scripture as a rule. In their view, the two classes of passages are not compatible; with us, they harmonize perfectly together; and,

consequently, while we have no difficulty in admitting whatever arguments they can bring in favor of the Bible, they find themselves obliged to answer strong and powerful documents in our favor.

But, in the second place, while the authority of Scripture, as a rule of faith, is thus perfectly compatible with the existence of an authority to teach, the existence of an authority to teach *excludes*, not, indeed, the Scripture, but the *all-sufficiency* of Scripture. For, where there is a supreme authority given, and man is commanded to obey it, from that command there is, assuredly, no retreat. And therefore the Scripture must needs be received, so as to be reconciled with the existence of a supreme authority in matters of faith existing in the Church.

In the third place, there must be texts, at least equally strong, brought against us, as what we adduce for our system; not merely such as say that the Scripture is useful, good, and profitable, but such as positively assert that the Scripture is *sufficient*; not such as tell us to search the Scriptures for particular objects, but such as command us to seek *all things* therein. There must be texts, the words of Christ or his apostles, to command us to make use of no rule but the written word; for observe, that in sanctioning any rule or principle whereby man is to be guided, it is necessary that the principle be somewhere laid down and explicitly defined, so that he should know what is to be the rule of his life, and the law whereby he must direct and regulate his conduct. And thus we, on our side, are not content with vague allusions to the authority of the Church, as a voucher for the doctrines therein taught; but believe that we have an express definition, that its authority is the rule of faith, and that all must obey and follow its guidance.

But there is another and more important distinction, which you can hardly fail to observe; that the moment the Catholic, in his train of argument, has taken his first step from profane to holy ground—the moment he has come to the conclusion, that the teaching of our blessed Saviour was divinely authorized, from that moment he returns not back again to human testimony; he has the divine sanction at every subsequent step, till he arrives at his last conclusion. Our Saviour gives a divine authority to the Church. The Church, with that authority, sanctions the book of Scripture. But analyze the other course of reasoning; suppose that you have arrived at the knowledge of Christ's divinity, and the authority of the apostles; you then take those passages which seem to you to say that the Scripture is the rule of faith.

Be it so—you have reached a vague authorization, that whatever writings are entitled to that name, are to be received as a guide in religion. Your next step must be to determine what writings have a claim to be considered inspired. But if the Church have no divine authority, you must go back to the ground you have left—of human testimony: you return from the authority of our Saviour and his apostles, in favor of studying the Scripture, back to another historical investigation, to discover what Scripture is, before you can resume the thread of the argument. This is an essential and vital flaw in the reasoning proposed as parallel to ours, and as sufficient to prove the efficacy of Scripture, as a rule of faith.

Such, therefore, is the course of argument which the Catholic Church pursues, and such is the course which any instructed Catholic would pursue, whenever he should think it necessary to refresh his mind as to the grounds of his belief; and by it he arrives at a perfectly logical and connected consequence, upon the authority of the Holy Scriptures. But before leaving this portion of my subject,—though I shall have to enlarge on this important consideration hereafter,—allow me to observe that the comparison between the old and new law, regarding the rule of faith, gives us very great and most useful lights, tending essentially to confirm the view which we have taken. For, we find, that to the Jews was given, indeed, a written law, but that there was a most express *command* to write it—that Moses was ordered to register all those precepts which God had given, even to the most minute particulars; and that this law was to be read to the people in the most solemn manner, every seventh year, at the Feast of Tabernacles.* Besides this, the law was purposely so interwoven with the daily actions and domestic concerns of the Jewish people, as to require that it should be ever before their eyes, that they should all possess a minute acquaintance with its provisions, so as to understand, at every turn, how to regulate their conduct. This, I conceive, we must consider characteristic of a written law, that it should not be merely formed of documents collected together, as it were, accidentally; but that provision should be taken for the rule's being drawn up, and then its being communicated to those whom it has to guide.

One would, therefore, naturally expect, that if our Saviour had intended to direct us to a knowledge of our duties by some writ

* Deut. xxxi. 10.

ten code of faith or morality, he would have expressly said to his apostles: "All the things which you hear from me, or which you see me perform, take care and register carefully; and preserve their records from all danger and risk, by multiplying and diffusing them among the faithful, for their future guidance. For, that which you write will form a code by which their conduct may be regulated, and by which they will be one day judged." But you do not meet, in the new law, with any thing of this sort; there is not a hint or intimation that our Saviour ever intended one word to be written down.

We find, moreover, on examining the history of these compositions, that they were, every one of them, the offspring of casual circumstances, and written for some local or personal purpose, which seemed to call them forth; that, if errors or abuses had not arisen so early in the Church, you would probably have been deprived of the most beautiful writings in the New Testament; that, if the blessed apostle St. John had not been preserved to a preternatural existence, after having suffered, what to others would have been fatal, the torments of martyrdom, he would not have been spared to complete the sacred volume. We find that St. Luke and St. Matthew wrote for a specific class of readers, for one particular country, or for even separate individuals; that the epistles of St. Paul were manifestly directed to different churches, and were intended merely to silence doubts, or answer difficulties, proposed by them, and also to correct and amend some accidental, or local corruptions; and if we examine them carefully, we shall find that the greater portion of our most important dogmas, instead of St. Paul's defining and explaining them, are only occasionally, parenthetically, and as illustrations introduced.

Now all this seems the reverse of a settled plan for the delivery of a code of laws; and the contrast is unquestionably greater when placed beside the Mosaic dispensation, in which there was an explicit injunction to record, and write down, and preserve with the greatest care, both by monuments, and by the depositing of the archetype in the sanctuary, those laws which had been dictated by divine command. But this necessarily is not the whole of the difficulty; for it is singular to observe in the Mosaic law, how, although we have in it the characteristics of a written code, and an express injunction to note down whatever was taught, yet by far the most important doctrines were not committed to writing: so that among the Jews there was a train of sacred tradition, containing within itself more vital dog-

mas than are written in the inspired volume. I could lay before you the arguments of a very learned living author, who has, within these few years, published a very elaborate treatise upon this subject; and who might have formed one of those instances, to which I alluded in my opening discourse, of persons brought to the Catholic religion, by the most diversified trains of argument. Here is one who, educated in the Jewish religion, had made himself perfect master of all the writings of the Jews, and who, it is evident from the whole line of argument that pervades his work, was brought to the Catholic religion, and is now one of its defenders, simply from finding that among the Jews there was a series of traditions, which received its development only in Catholic Christianity, and a sacred system of mystical theology, which has been manifestly preserved and continued, in our Church. The author to whom I allude, is the learned Molitor, of Francfort, author of two volumes replete with deep research, entitled, "The Philosophy of History, or on Tradition."

Those who will take the requisite pains to trace the doctrine of the Jews in this regard, either by their own research, or in the pages of this estimable writer, will find that, from the very beginning, from the delivery of the law to Moses, there was a great mass of precepts, not written, but committed to the keeping of the priesthood, and by them gradually communicated or diffused among the people, but yet hardly alluded to in the writings of the sacred book. A little consideration and examination will convince any one of this important fact: for it is certain, that when our Saviour came, the Jews were in possession of many doctrines exceedingly difficult to trace in Scripture, and yet doctrines of vital importance. Many of you are doubtless aware that a divine of the Established Church (Warburton) wrote to prove the divine legation of Moses, on the extraordinary ground, that he was able to achieve the great work of organizing a republic, and constituting a law to bind the people, without the sanction of a future state. He maintains, with great show of plausibility, that you cannot discover in the writings of Moses, or of the earlier Jews, one single positive text in proof of the future existence of the soul, or of a place of rewards and punishments in another life. And I am sure that any of you who is well versed in Scripture, if he will only run through his own recollections on the subject—if he will only try to gather for himself such a body of argument in Scripture as would convince any one, or teach a people those important truths, will find it extremely difficult so to construct it, as to bear the test of accu-

rate examination. But yet did the Jews believe in them? Did they possess them? Undoubtedly they did. For it is manifest, from many passages of the New Testament, and from their own works, that the doctrines of a future state, and a resurrection, were fully believed and taught. Here, then, is an important dogma, not of natural, but of revealed religion, and one which is expressly received, repeated, and confirmed, by additional sanctions, in the New Law, which must have been handed down by secret teaching and tradition. So true is this, that the Sadducees, followed in later times by the Karaites, formed a sect among the Jews, who rejected traditional doctrines, and consequently the resurrection of the dead, and the existence of a spiritual soul in men.* And thus we find St. Paul join himself to the Pharisees, who held the two, not as to a sect, but as to the true orthodox portion of the Jewish Church. "I am a Pharisee, the son of Pharisees: concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both."† And as such our Saviour acknowledges them: although he clearly distinguishes between their authority in teaching dogma, and their corruptions in matters of practical morality, and bases the former on their descent, as teachers, from the legislator Moses.‡

When our Saviour deduces the sublime doctrine of a future resurrection, from the Almighty's being styled the God of Abraham and of Jacob—the God, not of the dead, but of the living; it is, perhaps, difficult to discover the link between these two members of the argument. For how can the resurrection be proved from God's calling himself the God of Abraham? But by knowing the Jewish forms of reasoning, and the manner in which they connect the two dogmas of the soul's survival, and the body's resurrection, we understand how his hearers were satisfied by the argument.§

In the same way, our Saviour tells us that Moses bore testimony of him; and in conversing with his two disciples on the road to Emmaus, quoted the authority of Moses for the necessity of his suffering, and so entering into glory;|| and yet you will in vain search the books of Moses to discover this important dogma, of the necessity of the Messiah's dying to redeem his people. Where, then, had these points been preserved, save in

* See Molitor. tom. i. cap. 3.

† Acts xxiii. 5—8; xxvi. 5. Comp. Matt. xxii. 23.

‡ Matt. xxiii. 3.

§ Matt. xxii. 32.

|| Luke xxi. 26.

the traditions of the Jews, as may be proved from their later works?

Another example may be drawn from the New Testament. When our Saviour proposed to Nicodemus the doctrine of a spiritual birth, or regeneration, and he truly or affectedly understood it not, he reprov'd him in these words: "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?"* What does this rebuke imply, but that a teacher among the Jews ought to have been acquainted with this important doctrine, from his very office as a teacher? Yet tell me where it is ever taught in the old law, or whence could he have possessed it, except from the traditional lore preserved among the priests and learned?

In the later writings of the Jews, we observe clear manifestations of their belief in the Trinity, and in the mystery of the Incarnation, and this couched in the very terms made use of by St. John. For in the earliest uninspired writings of the Jews, we have the *Word of God* spoken of as something co-equal and co-existing with Him,† and yet scarcely a trace of such doctrines is to be found in the written law, although they belong not to natural but to revealed religion. They must therefore have been delivered as a deposit into the hands of the priesthood, and by them preserved inviolate to the time of Christ. I need hardly add, that the Jews themselves acknowledge this delivery by tradition, of a secret and more important doctrine. The learned author to whom I refer puts this quite out of doubt: and I will content myself with saying, that in the first page of one of their most esteemed and most ancient treatises, which, at least in Italy, is put into the hands of Jewish children for elementary education, it is expressly stated that Moses received on Sinai, besides the written, an oral and traditional revelation, which he delivered to the priests.‡

I have brought these instances by way of illustration, to show what a strong class of arguments it must require to prove that rule of faith which excludes traditional teaching; because we see that, even when the written law is expressly enjoined, it is far from excluding the existence of an unwritten law; yea, and of one to which is committed the exclusive preservation of most important doctrines. In like manner, therefore, when we come

* John iii. 11.

† In the Targumim, or Chaldee paraphrases, wherever God is said to speak within himself, this is rendered by "God said to his Word."

‡ Pirke Aboth.

to examine authorities, we shall find that it requires reasons exceedingly strong to prove, not merely that the Scripture is the rule of faith, but that it is an *all-sufficient—the exclusive* rule: and however strong the terms may otherwise be, we cannot easily admit them to be exclusive of that other traditional teaching, even though backed by a formal command to have a written code.

II. Such, my brethren, is the simple and usual train of argument whereby we arrive at the possession of the Holy Scriptures, and of its entire canon and inspiration. But you will say, What have we gained, and in what is our condition better than that of others? Even here is a train of argument requiring considerable investigation; by it we are equally left to inquire into the authenticity of the sacred books, and the faith we should put in the circumstances they relate; because we have first to learn what Christ taught regarding his Church. Another explanation must therefore be made, of the manner in which our rule is applicable; and here the doctrine of the Catholic Church is such as obviously to remove these difficulties, and make the rule one of the simplest acceptance, and yet able to bear the investigation of the most learned. For the Catholic Church teaches and believes—(I beg to observe that I am not *proving* our doctrines, but only stating them, that you may understand what I shall hereafter by argument establish)—that faith is not the production of man's ingenuity, not the result of his study or investigation, but a virtue essentially infused by God in baptism; and such must be, more or less, the belief of every Church that adopts the practice of infant baptism. True, the article of the Church of England regarding this sacrament, which says that by baptism "faith is confirmed and grace increased," would seem to suppose that faith exists in the soul before baptism is administered; but however that anomaly has to be explained, it is certain that the very idea of infant baptism, as a sacrament, supposes a living and vivifying principle communicated in it—that is, a communication to the person so baptized of the faith of the Church into which he is admitted. And therefore, assuming faith to be a principle infused by God, it follows that in a soul purged of sin, and adorned by him with the graces given in baptism, that virtue becomes an active and living principle, and ready, on the presentation of its proper object, to come into complete and perfect action. The moment, therefore, that the doctrines of religion are proposed, and the understanding, now able to apprehend the truths revealed by God, is presented with them, no

matter in what order, or by what means, provided the doctrines are true, there is a proper object presented to the action of that virtue; the two necessary elements are brought together—the actual truth and the faculty or virtue which God has given us for its apprehension: and the consequence is, that truth is believed on substantial grounds, and under the influence of a living and heavenly principle. Whereas, if we admit the supposition that no man has a right to believe any thing but that which he has himself investigated, and of whose truth he is personally satisfied, we must presume that, before the first act of faith, there existed an interval of infidelity positive or negative, during which fundamental truth, not having been discovered, was consequently not believed. This simple process allows the child and the most illiterate to perform an act of faith grounded on proper motives. We are subsequently led by the Church to the full knowledge of the grounds and motives of our belief; we are encouraged to exercise our abilities, research, and learning, in demonstrating and confirming, in every way we can, the doctrines which it teaches, and which that preliminary instruction had brought us to believe. And thus, as I before remarked, while by its simplicity it is adapted to the weakest and lowest, it leaves room for the exercise of the faculties of the most able and learned men.

III. This may suffice as to the simplicity of the principle in its application; a few words more will prove its adequacy to its natural ends. I observed, when we last met, that the end of every rule and law, and consequently of every rule of faith, was to bring men into a unity of principle and action. I showed you that the rule proposed by others is proved by experience to lead to exactly opposite results; in other words, that it removes men farther from that union towards which it must be intended to bring them: for it leads them to the most contradictory opinions, professing to be supported and proved by precisely the same principle of faith. But now, if you will only examine, in its action, the principle which the Catholic Church admits, you will see that it is fully equal to those objects for which the rule was given: inasmuch as its necessary tendency is to bring all the opinions and understandings of men into the most perfect unity, and to the adoption of one only creed. For, the moment any Catholic doubts, not alone the principle of his faith, but any one of those doctrines which are thereon based—the moment he allows himself to call in question any of the dogmas which the Catholic Church teaches as having been handed down within

her—that moment the Church conceives him to have virtually abandoned all connection with her. For she exacts such implicit obedience, that if any member, however valuable, however he may have devoted his early talents to the illustration of her doctrines, fall away from his belief in any one point, he is cut off without reserve; and we have, in our own times, seen striking and awful instances of this fact.

But, my brethren, does not this seem tyrannical?—Is it not an iron yoke and a band of brass, to the subjugation of men?—a bowing down involuntarily of those powers and faculties which the Almighty left free, to be exercised by each individual? If any of you should think thus, he understands not the principle of Catholic Unity. I know that it is often represented as like that tyrannical sway which the conqueror exercises over vanquished vassals; as though the zeal which the Church has for seeing men in distant quarters of the globe subject to her laws, were no other feeling but what swells the emperor's pride, as he receives tribute from natives of a distant land, a feeling of triumph over the liberties of men, an exultation to see their souls bowed down in homage before her throne. But those who know the feelings with which this submission is united, are well aware how fallacious such a representation is.

Nothing can be more beautiful, in the conception of a Christian Church, than a perfect unity of belief. Such an idea is beautiful to the imagination, because it is the consecration of the first and most essential principles whereon society is based. For the social union tends to merge the feelings of each individual in the general mass, and leads him to embrace mankind, rather than individual men. And in like manner does the principle of religious unity tend to excite your love towards them, no longer as brethren in the flesh, but as connected with you by a holier and diviner bond, and assists towards inspiring every member of the community with all that can be reciprocally felt, in the nearest ties and connections of our nature. And if the very idea of a republic or government in which men were united by such real or ideal bonds, as that they fought side by side, or contributed towards the common weal, did seem to them of old so beautiful and heavenly, that the very conception of such a state, embodied under outward symbols, should have been deified and worshipped, what shall we say of that sacred union which holds men together, not merely as constituents of a community, but as members of one mystical body; not cemented together by the sense of mutual want, or strung one unto another by the ties of

the flesh, or the interests of the world, but firmly united by the headship of One in whom the sublimest flight of thought reposes, as in its proper sphere; and inly communicating through the circulation of vital influences passing from one unto the other; not contributing to the common stock, the gifts or qualities of earth, but the fairest virtues, the most precious ornaments of our nature; not directed, in their views, towards a worldly aggrandizement or a passing glory, nor linked in battle-field by a bond of hatred against a human foe, but looking upwards for their trophies and rewards to the peaceful smile of heaven, after they shall have contended together in the gentle strife of mutual and universal love? Then add the reflection, how this influence stretches beyond the reach of any other known sentiment among mankind; for, outstripping all the motives of sympathy among men of different countries, it flies over mountains, and seas, and oceans, and puts into the mouths of nations, the most remote and the most dissimilar, one canticle of praise, and into their minds one symbol of belief, and into their hearts one sentiment of charity. And thus professing alike, they kneel in countless multitude before one altar, and from the soul of each proceeds the golden chain which joins them unto it, which God joins unto the rest, which he holdeth in his hand, for in Him is the centre towards which the faith of all converges, and in His truth it is blended into uniformity and oneness of thought. Surely this is the idea which you would wish to conceive, of the efficiency and of the effects of that rule which has been given by God to produce unity of belief; and such you will find it existing and acting in the Catholic Church.

This idea too is beautiful to the mind of the Catholic, from its obvious tendency to equalize and level the minds and understandings of men, when brought before the searching eye of God. Not to him is religion a deep well, to which comes each one, furnished with his own vessel, and draws and carries away a different proportion, according to its capacity or his strength; but it is a living and ever-gushing fountain, springing up unto eternal life, where all may drink to equal refreshment, who put their mouths to its quickening stream. Not with him is that distinction granted in the inward, which St. James condemns in the outward man; that of a higher place being allotted to him that hath the ring upon his finger, and the costly robe upon his shoulders, while the poor in intellect sitteth at his footstool. But he, on the contrary, sees all minds attuned to the same feelings, and all understandings brought down to the same simplicity

of belief, till the intellectual and the rude, the wise and the foolish, stand on an equal ground. Brought down, did I say? Rather are both caught up and borne on the wings of the same sacred truth, to a conception so lofty above all human wisdom, as that the distance between the two, when standing here below, shall seem but an infinitesimal element in the height.

But this idea of religious unity does not merely by its beauty satisfy the imagination of the Catholic; it meets all the notions which his reason could suggest of the character of truth. For this, in its own nature, must seem to be one and indivisible, the reflection of that knowledge which exists in the Godhead, communicated through the one Mediator, the incarnate Word and Wisdom of the Father. And thus, by the idea of only one faith, secured by an unerring authority, he establishes the existence in religion of real *objective* truth, instead of the *subjective* in each one's mind;—he conceives the eye to be fixed on the correct prototype, rather than on its image, broken, and refracted, and distorted, through the imperfect medium of individual examination.

And the consideration of this aptness and conformity of such a system to the idea of truth, will be further enhanced to the Catholic's reason, when he considers wherefore it has been given. For assuredly they who are to be guided are one in nature and feelings, have the same passions to conquer, the same perfection to attain, and the same crown to win. And therefore should it seem no less reasonable that the road whereon they travel should be equal, and the food and remedy supplied should be the same, and the guide that conducts them be only one.

But then also is this unity of faith subservient to another great end, to the evidence of our blessed Saviour's true religion. For he was pleased to declare, that the unity observable among his followers should be among the strongest evidence of his heavenly mission. "And not for them only," he exclaimed, "do I pray, but, for them also who, through their word, shall believe in me: that they all may be one, as the Father in me and I in thee, *that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*"* And that this unity is not merely of the heart through love, but also of the mind in faith, his blessed apostle hath abundantly declared. For, according to him, if we wish to walk worthy of the vocation wherein we have been called, it must be not only by "humility, and mildness, and patience, supporting one another

* JOHN xviii. 20-22

in charity," but we must be "careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," so as to be "one body," as well as "one Spirit," and to have "one faith," as much as "one Lord and one baptism."* Not surely that charity, the beautiful and the perfect, steps not beyond the circumscribing line of religious unity, or that her genial influences, like a flower's sweet odor, spread not abroad far beyond the plant which first produces it; but universal as must be our love of men, this will be ever its noblest exercise, to wish and to strive that all be brought to that closer union and unity, which is in, and through faith. Our charity should ever lead us to labor with others, that they may see, like ourselves, how complete and perfect unity can only be based upon this profession of a common faith: and that no rule, no principle, can attain this great object, save that which the Catholic Church holds, and proposes, the institution whereof by God's authority, shall form, under the divine blessing, the subject of our next disquisition.

"And the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen."†

* Ephes. iv. 2, 4.

† Gal. vi. 12.

LECTURE THE FOURTH.

THE CATHOLIC RULE OF FAITH PROVED.

MATTHEW, xvii. 1.

"And after six days, Jesus taketh unto him Peter, and James, and John, his brethren, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and he was transfigured before them."

THE incident of our Saviour's life, which is recorded in this day's Gospel, must be a subject of consolation to every Christian. To see our blessed Lord,—whose instructions were indeed listened to with avidity by crowds, and whose miracles filled the world with wonder and curiosity, but yet, whose doctrines were so little followed, and whose cause was espoused by so few,—retired, on this occasion, though but for a moment, into the happy society of those who really loved and honored him,—to see him receive the willing homage of his chosen ones on earth, and of the spirits of the just made perfect in heaven,—to see him, moreover, obtain that glory from the Father which his sublime dignity deserved, is assuredly some consolation to our feelings, and some compensation for that bitter sympathy which we must feel towards him through his neglected career.

But yet, my brethren, there is a circumstance of much greater importance than such feelings, connected with this cheering and consolatory narrative. For, you will observe, on the one hand, who are chosen to be the witnesses of this glorious scene. They are the most favored of his apostles, the representatives in a manner, and deputies of those who had to preach his doctrines with most especial authority, and give to their commission the strongest sanctions of its truth: James, who was destined to be the first of the twelve to seal his doctrine with his blood; John, who was intended to prolong the age of the apostles almost beyond its natural duration by his protracted life, and thus, as it were, to dovetail their authority and evidence into the teaching of those that succeeded them, and, above all, Peter, who was expressly appointed, after his fall and conversion, to confirm his brethren, to open the gates of salvation to Jews and Gentiles, and be the solid foundation of the entire Church.

We may, therefore, easily imagine with what awful strength and power the testimony must have been presented to their minds which was given on this solemn occasion; and we find that by the apostles themselves, it was considered as giving the most formal sanction to the teaching of their divine Master. For St. Peter expressly says, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but having been made eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, this voice coming down to him from the excellent glory: 'This is my beloved Son in whom I have pleased myself; hear ye him.' And this voice we heard brought from heaven, when we were with him in the holy mount."*

It is to the testimonies, then, given at this time, that St. Peter appeals, as some of the strong groundwork on which he builds his authority to preach. And what were the testimonies here given? They were, manifestly, of a twofold character. For, in the first place, there appeared, beside our Saviour, Moses and Elias, the two most eminent and divinely gifted men of the olden time,—bearing homage and giving testimony unto Him, resigning all the privileges and pledges of the law into His hands, who was come to perfect and complete it. For, my brethren, not merely by the words of the law are we taught; but we all understand, that whatever happened unto the Fathers was done to them in figure; so that not in their writings only, but in their persons and actions, we may find a certain allusion and prophetic reference to that which later was fulfilled. But besides theirs, was another and incomparably mightier testimony here given unto Christ, that of the eternal Father, commanding the apostles to lend implicit credence to whatever they should hear from His mouth. "This is my beloved Son in whom I have well pleased myself, hear ye him." Judge, therefore, how solemnly the authority of our divine Saviour must have been impressed on the minds of these apostles; and when, afterwards, they heard Him transfer to them that authority which here He received—when afterwards they heard Him say, that, "as the Father had sent Him so did He also send them,"—that "all who heard them heard also Him—that whosoever despised them despised not only Him, but Him also who sent Him:—" consider what a strong warrant and security this must have been to them; how, recurring to the strong assurances given in His favor on mount Thabor,

* 2 Peter i. 16, 19.

they must have felt themselves invested with mighty power, when they went forth to teach; yea, with the same authority, precisely, as they had heard given on this occasion to His words.

Now, it is to these two classes of testimonies in favor of this authority to teach, not only as granted to the apostles, but as perpetuated in the Church, that I wish to call your attention this evening. First, we will consider the testimony of Moses and Elias, or of the old law, in its constitution and prophecies, to the form, character, and qualities of the Church of God: and, Secondly, we will hear the voice of God in the express words and injunctions of our blessed Saviour, seeing what they would lead us to conceive regarding the rule and principle of faith, which I endeavored to explain to you at our last meeting, namely, the guidance of his church as the infallible depository of His truth.

The plan which I have followed in these discourses, that is, the simple inductive form of argument, which I have preferred, as leaving less ground for cavil, renders it necessary that one discourse should be closely linked with the foregoing, so as to have an unbroken idea of the entire argument, to see the influence which the antecedents have upon what follows, and also the strong confirmation, which they, in their turn, receive from that which succeeds them. It is, therefore, perhaps, at the risk of being tedious, that I take the liberty of detaining you a few moments, while I recapitulate one or two points, on which I dwelt at full length in my last discourse. Two things I particularly beg to be remembered; in the first place, the explanation which I gave regarding the foundation of Church authority. You may remember that I did not enter on any arguments, but contented myself with laying before you the whole Catholic system—showing the connection of one part with another; and I endeavored to account to you for every step in the process for reasoning, which might be necessary to arrive at its full demonstration. I observed, therefore, that in the Church Christ was a body of rulers and teachers, selected in the first instance, by our blessed Saviour Himself, from among the most fervent of His followers, to whom he confided certain doctrines and laws, coupled with sure pledges, that those who succeeded them should be the depositaries, and inheritors of whatsoever He had conferred on them; and, consequently, of the promises expressly given, that He would himself teach through that body in the Church, and be himself the director of all its counsels until the end of time. Hence, the Catholic belief, that the Church of Christ consists

of the body of the faithful united with its pastors, among whom Christ resides, and through whom He teaches; so that it is impossible for the Church to fall into error.* And as we admit, at the same time, that no new revelation of doctrines can be made, so do we believe, that the power of the Church consists in nothing more than defining that which was believed from all times, and in all her dominion. Such is the authority of the Church, according to Catholic principles.

The second point to which I beg to recall your attention, although it was only incidentally mentioned, is an important link of connection with what I am going to explain this evening; I mean the fact of the Old Law having been expressly a written law; while, at the same time, most essential doctrines existing among the Jews at the time of our Saviour, and often assumed by Him as the very basis of His preaching to them, had not been delivered in the law, nay, were scarcely clearly recorded in the prophets, and must, therefore, have been handed down by secret and unwritten tradition.

I proceed now to the first portion of my task, which forms the completion and development of that idea, by explaining the strong arguments of analogy which the Old Law gives us, for constructing the Church to be by Christ established. And you will bear with me if I first propose some preliminary observations.

St. Paul has described the glorious triad of virtues whereby man is brought into union with God, when he says: "now there remaineth *faith, hope, charity*, these are three."† And if you will reasonably consider this matter, you will, methinks, hardly fail to observe that threefold, according to the number of virtues here rehearsed, are the stages whereby it hath pleased Divine Providence to accomplish its designs in behalf of man, and to bring him to that sum of perfection whereof he is capable.

The first state was that of hope, in the dispensation given to the fathers; wherein, as divided into its three eras of promise, of prophecy, and of silent expectation, all was referred to the future, and every other virtue was in some way embraced and comprehended in this one. For if they believed, their faith should seem to have been a disposition and readiness to believe one day the teacher whom God had promised, and, in the fulness of time, should give unto his people, after whose manifestation their just did pant as the hart after the water-springs, rather than a clear

* Lect. ii. p. 35.

† 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

apprehension of what we justly consider the great mysteries of salvation. And hence it is, that St. Paul, speaking of the peculiar faith of some among them, and how difficult it was, doth tell us in express words, that "against hope they believed in hope." And so likewise in hope may they be said to have loved, inasmuch as their love, or charity, was but a wistfulness and longing after God's coming to them in the flesh, that so they might stand in His blessed presence, a treasuring up and deep-embosoming, as it were, of the affections for a future outburst of the same, when the sum of His mercies should be cast up in their behalf; and not a clear and distinct sense of His beauty and loveliness, or any anxious yearnings after union with Him, whose light, inaccessible, had hitherto rather dazzled and oppressed, than invited and cheered them. Thus it came to pass, that all the doctrines and rites proposed to them wore their looks, in a manner, towards the dawn and day-spring of a brighter season, that their teaching was all in prophecy, their history all in types, their worship all in symbols, and, by a just analogy, their righteousness all in hope.

Next came the ministration of faith, wherein it is our happiness to live, in which much of what then was future now is past, and most of what was then but hoped for, is now believed; and every other good gift and virtue is, somehow, exercised through this one, which, to us, is the root and nourisher of them all. For, if a great part of former hope hath been swallowed up in us by faith, that which remaineth unto us of this virtue consists no longer in dark adumbrations and mysterious images, but in objects proposed to us definitely, though dimly, by faith and in faith, with clear and express conditions, and subject to no farther varieties or distincter revelations.

And charity too, in our regard, reaches us in the same manner. For, if the glorious things of God are seen by us, as St. Paul saith, but darkly in the glass of faith, yet hath this glass a concentrating power which makes their rays converge into one point, and play upon our innermost soul, with a warming, as well as a brightening influence; and the difference between us and those of the older dispensation, is briefly this: that the revelation of a final state, wherein God should be the soul's full possession, shone to them as a distant light in a dark place, *towards* which, indeed, they might direct their course, but *by* which they could hardly guide their steps; whereas to us it is a lamp, as

well as a beacon, the cheerer, as well as the aim, of our toilsome pilgrimage.

And then at last will come that final state of blessedness, when faith and hope will be entirely swallowed up in boundless and endless charity; when the "light intellectual full of love" shall reabsorb and quench, in its peerless brightness, the scattered beams it had before suffered to wander upon earth; when every other good and holy thing shall melt and be transmuted in that one assimilating, unifying essence; and, like dewdrops which have refreshed us in the morning, and then have been caught up by some heaving swell of the ocean-tide, though small and imperfect, shall become the elements of the unlimited and eternal.

We, thus, are placed in a middle state, between one past and one that is yet to come, a state necessarily intended as the completion of the former, and as a preparation for the latter; whereof the type is shadowed forth in that which hath preceded, while itself is the emblem and fair image of that which shall follow. Now, this position must give rise to many interesting analogies; forasmuch, as all things being thus in unbroken progress from the beginning to the end of God's dispensations, without violent shocks or sudden changes, we must expect to find, in the present order or state, such qualities and dispositions as may suit this its twofold character, that is to say, perfective of a former, and initiatory of a future state. And even as a skilful geometer shall, by the accurate measurement of a shadow, under certain conditions, tell you exactly the height and proportions of the object which projects it, and, again, from the survey of this, shall define what the other should at any time be, so may we, by a diligent study of those two other dispensations as well as of our own, the one whereof we are the fulfilment, the other whereof we are the figure, arrive at much important knowledge regarding the condition of our present estate. For the present, my theme confines me to the evidences of the past; how the present dispensation may be the image of the future state, I may yet find a fitting occasion to declare.

A promise of redemption was the first good word spoken to man by God, after his original sentence of punishment; and this word of hope fell as a seed upon a soil that craved it, and it grew therein and brought forth fruits, the only ones which could remind the exile of his lost paradise, fruits of holy knowledge and restored life, to be one day tasted without further danger. And as the different families of the human race did separate from their first dwelling place after the flood, and disperse into distant

lands, each took with it some graft or seedling of this precious plant, as a memorial of its lost, and of its hoped-for destinies, and bequeathed it to its descendants as a sacred and priceless trust. In fact, there is no mythology so dark as not to promise the restoration of some forfeited golden age; and a heathen fable has recorded to us the belief, that of all the treasures which heaven bestowed upon him at his formation, hope was alone left to forlorn man, when he lost them by his folly. But how soon were all these divine promises disfigured and corrupted; how soon was their true purport clean forgotten; how completely did they degenerate into the fond inventions of men, and fall into the wicked subserviency of all their worst desires! And, hence, whatever were the benefits intended by God's goodness in giving this entailed blessing to the human race, all those benefits would have been inevitably lost, the goodness which designed them would have been thrown away, and the blessing itself would have been but as a prodigal's gift, if God's infinite wisdom had not provided an expedient against such a sad misfortune.

For this purpose, He chose, out of all the nations of the earth, one people whom He made the keeper of His great deposit; He separated them from among the rest, He made them the sacerdotal caste of the human race, He surrounded them with badges of His protection, and of His special watchfulness over them, He gave into their hands documents of their authority to teach; and then, placing the rest of mankind, no matter how learned or how polished, in the rank of untaught scholars, He left them to receive from those alone, all accurate knowledge of what concerned holier truths and purer revelations. Then, as all those organs in animate or inanimate nature, which have to perform notable functions, are themselves composite, being made up of smaller organs like themselves, and these again involving within them an ever decreasing compound series, so here also, out of this people he chose one tribe, and out of that tribe one family, and from that family one man and his line; that each should respectively stand towards the class whence chosen in the same superior relationship: and so the connecting band should be drawn spirally round from mankind to the sanctuary, and the saving influences which blessed God's promises past, through still widening channels, upon the world.

From this it would appear, that the means taken by God's wisdom for preserving those doctrines of hope which He had communicated unto mankind, was to institute a visible and compact society within which He virtually guaranteed their perse-

verance, and over which He watched with tender solicitude: and we see that His action upon this body was not detailed upon each individual, but was through a more select order of men, constituting a graduated hierarchy, whose duty it was to edify by example, to purify by sacrifice, to instruct by explanations of the law, to stand, in fine, between God and His people, ministering unto both, as His chosen servants, and their appointed teachers. The objects of this internal organization could only be the preservation of essential unity of worship and of heart. Reuben was obliged yearly to come from beyond the Jordan, and Zabulon from over the mountains, and both to worship with their brethren, at one altar, in Jerusalem; lest new opinions or rites should creep in among them, and that communion which is the essence of religion, be even slightly broken.

Now, looking for the application of this beautiful constitution to the dispensation whereof it was a shadow, the first thing that must strike us is, how completely the New Testament links the one unto the other, by applying to the new state all the imagery and phraseology employed in prophecy, as descriptive of the peculiar characteristics of the old. The Church, or dispensation of faith, is now the kingdom which was to be restored with its worship by the Son of David: there is a priesthood and an altar, there is authority and subordination, there is union and unity all as before: and, indeed, in the later prophecies of the old law, the Church is never otherwise described than as a revival, extension, and perfection of the former state. Now, this is all explained only by two reflections. First, that the former constitution was not abolished, but exchanged, and by that change perfected; and in this manner did Jesus say, that he came not to abolish, but to complete or accomplish: secondly, that the former was a type and merged into its reality, not so much dying as passing into a second existence, where a true sacrifice covered a typical oblation, where redemption given, passed before redemption expected, where uncertainty had ripened into knowledge, and hope yielded its kingdom to faith. To illustrate the noble by the base, the former state was, as that living but creeping sheath wherein lie infolded for a time the corresponding parts of a more splendid and gorgeous insect, which in due time takes upon itself the vital functions, till then, by the other exercised, —and rises towards heaven, the same yet different,—a transmigration rather than an offspring.

It is evident, then, that there must be counterparts in the two dispensations, analogies and resemblances, clearly showing ours

to be the perfecting and filling up of the other's outline; that all forms or institutions, framed to ennoble the former before the nations of earth, to draw their respect and attention towards it, to invite them to learn the truths intrusted to it, must be found here in greater perfection: that to it must be granted a stronger guarantee and security of God's constant love, protection, and support; that in it must reign, far beyond the other, that beautiful co-ordination of parts, sympathy of feeling, and harmony of design, which God did in its prototype ordain. If you admit not all these, not only do you destroy all necessary resemblance, but you lower infinitely the present beyond the former dispensation: you invert the order of God's working, you destroy that fair progressive course of development, which is the characteristic of all His works, wherein are no breaks or violent passages, but all succeeds by a most sweetly-guiding ordinance.

And are the truths and blessings now communicated to mankind less precious than those former ones, that they should require smaller securities, and less jealous precautions for their preservation, than of old? Should there be less dignity, less authority conferred upon their depositaries? Or have men so changed, that what before was necessary to keep them from fatal error and corruption, is now no longer needed? On the contrary, my brethren, hope, the great deposit of the elder dispensation, is that feeling which is the first to be conceived, and the last to be thrown off, a feeling rather dangerous from its tendency to increase, than from any fear of its extinction; while faith is ever a sterner and drier quality; something which we adopt with effort and pain, and lose more easily; and which requires consequently still stronger defences. Then again, there is a still greater difference; for hope may in its forms be various as the divers imaginings of men, borrowing its scenery and lively shapes from whatever to each seems most desirable; but faith is the impress—the coinage of God's own truth upon the soul, and God's own truth can be but one.

In all this, methinks, we have a key to explaining much in what Christ was pleased to ordain. For, if I see him appoint teachers to his people, shepherds to his flock, and established thus an order of subordination in doctrine and faith; then, promising His uninterrupted guidance till the end of time to those whom He has appointed to rule and instruct, thereby secure unreserved assurance to all that follow their doctrine: if then I take all these arrangements and ordinances in their plain and simple meaning, and construct therewith, in my mind, a great religious

community, professing entire unity of doctrines under teachers directed by God; I see there so complete, so just a reality to the shallow of the previous dispensation, so true a correspondence of parts, so nice a fitness of them to similar ends—and all this so improved, so ennobled, so perfected into a purer and more spiritual character, from the nature of its objects, of its doctrines, of its diviner sanctions, that I cannot for a moment hesitate to believe, that, hereby alone, *could* accomplishment be given to the foreshowings of the former state, and that consequently no other conception of its fulfilment can be correct.

But now resolve, on the other hand, religion into a mere aggregate of individuals, each having his own peculiar measure of faith; bound up only together, as in one bundle, by external ties, not inly communicating by vital influences, like branches of one tree; deprive them collectively as individually of all security against fatal error, of all promise of permanent support; deny in it existence of any one universal aggregation towards which all men, no matter what their color or country, shall turn in full assurance that it can give them life; strip it of all the venerable rights which authority and a divine sanction alone can give, and assuredly you shall have produced something so curiously different from all whereunto God had so long prepared the world, that they who look therein for the accomplishment of past types, and the completion of the former state, must perforce acknowledge that the order of God's designs hath suffered strange perturbations.

But you will perchance say: With all the precautions which His providence took to secure the safe transmission of his promises, see how fearfully they of old did fall from Him, and forget all that He had taught them: and shall He then be supposed to have retained the same imperfect institutions now, which failed so sadly then? Now, far from there being any objection in this to what I have hitherto said, it seems to me to afford rather a confirmation thereof. Much falling off there often was—a total loss never. It was necessary that the hopes of the people should be often tried, and this was done in the way best suited to put them to the keenest test. First, they were left to wander forty years in the wilderness, that they might long for their promised land; then they were from time to time given over to enemies, that they might wish for deliverers from God, that so the desire for redemption might ever be before their eyes. And this period may all well correspond to the early days of persecution in Christianity, wherein rest and ease from tyrannical oppression

were its most earnest prayer. Then came, in both, the time of religious dissension, of schism and heresy. For in the old times, men must have been severely tried, after the division in the kingdom took place, and later when in Samaria the true God was worshipped in a separate national communion, by hardly knowing how to reconcile domestic feelings and social customs with that unity which called them to God's appointed temple in a foreign land; and many doubtless thereby fell, and kept themselves separated from it through these worldly considerations. And, even, as then, this sort of trial was allowed by God to prove the fidelity of his people, so does St. Paul assure us that "now there must needs be also heresies, that they also that are approved may be made manifest among us."* But never formerly did the greatest of those defections destroy the deposit of hope given unto God's children; seeing that in the main it was found entire in their hands when Jesus Christ came to demand it; and that, whenever they had seemed most grievously fallen away, it needed no new reformings or great study of matters, to restore the knowledge of all that had once been taught.

And here we come to the last and great fulfilment of former types. The Jewish dispensation was necessarily imperfect; otherwise it never need have been superseded. It was subject, therefore, to constant disturbances and failings; and a remedy was supplied for these in the establishment of prophecy—of a series, that is, of godly men—extraordinary messengers sent by God, whenever any particular derangement or error had crept into His inheritance. Now since prophecy, considered as an ordinance, was necessarily to cease with fulfilment, some provision was requisite to take its place in the new state, and counteract the tendency towards error of the human mind. And see how beautifully this part of the figure was accomplished, and that in two ways. First, the prophets were the types of Jesus Christ; and, we shall see Jesus Christ himself come and take their place, assuming here also their ministry, promising to remain with His new kingdom, teaching therein always, to the consummation of the world. Secondly, the prophets were the tongues of the Holy Ghost; and the Holy Ghost himself comes down upon His Church to guide it into all truth. And thus is an institution for the removal or correction of error, changed, by a twofold fulfilment of the most beautiful and perfect character, into a provision for the entire and perpetual prevention of the same.

* 1 Cor. xi. 19

But, my brethren, I have thus far rather appealed to your own recollections, than laid before you any specific proof either of the connection which I have described as existing between the old and new Testaments, or of the correspondence of institutions between the two, especially in reference to the preservation of the Church from error. I could, indeed, have occupied your attention much longer, by entering into a detailed examination of the prophecies of the old law; I could have shown you how, from the very beginning till the end, there is a most beautiful series of manifestations, which go on gradually unfolding new qualities of the kingdom of Christ, until at length the picture is not only as complete as I have attempted to sketch it, but goes beyond my representation in clearness and strength, as much as the word of God is superior to that of man.

But yet, that I may not appear to be building upon a frail foundation, I will read to you one prophecy, and a very small portion of another, which seem to contain within themselves all that I have laid down, and give us much more than is required, to secure the train of argument which we shall afterwards pursue. Both are from the prophet *Isaias*; and all interpreters, who admit the existence of prophecy, allow them to be descriptive of the Church of the Messiah. The first is comprised in the fifty-fourth chapter.

“Enlarge the place of thy tent and stretch out the skins of thy tabernacles; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes. For thou shalt pass on to the right hand and to the left, and *thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles*, and shall inhabit the desolate cities. Fear not, for thou shalt not be confounded nor blush, for thou shalt not be put to shame; because thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt remember no more the reproaches of thy widowhood. *For He that made thee shall rule over thee, the Lord of Hosts is His name, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, shall be called the God of all the earth.* For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken, and mourning in spirit, and as a wife cast off from her youth, said thy God. For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a moment of indignation have I hid my face from thee, but *with everlasting kindness have I had mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer.* This thing is to me as in the days of Noah, to whom I swore that I would no more bring the waters of Noah upon the earth; so have I sworn not to be angry with thee, and not to rebuke thee. For the mountains shall be moved, and the hills shall tremble; *but my mercy shall*

not depart from thee, and the covenant of my peace shall not be moved, said the Lord, that hath mercy on thee. Oh, poor little one, tossed with tempest, without all comfort, behold I will lay thy stones in order, and will lay thy foundation with sapphires.—*All thy children shall be taught of God, and great shall be the peace of thy children.* And thou shalt be founded in justice; depart far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear: and from terror, for it shall not come near thee. Behold, *an inhabitant shall come who was not with me; he that was a stranger to thee before, shall be joined to thee.** No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that resisteth thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the inheritance of the servants of the Lord, and their justice with me.”

To this striking passage I will add the concluding verse of the fifty-ninth chapter. “*This is my covenant with thee, saith the Lord. My spirit which is in thee, and the words that I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.*”

Surely, my brethren, the drift of these two passages cannot be mistaken. In them we are told that the Church of God, identified with the Jewish Church then existing—for this is addressed—should not continue much longer in a state of abasement; but that God should raise it up and extend its boundaries, so as to embrace all the kingdoms of the world, and the nations from the east unto the west; that it should be authorized to condemn every one that might rise up against it in judgment; that its teaching should be such as though the very words were put into its mouth by God; that there shall not depart from its seed, that is, its latest posterity, to the end of time; that God Almighty, the Lord of Hosts, the God of heaven and earth, should Himself teach in it, and that this divine teacher should be the Redeemer of His people, in such a way, that all its children should be called “taught of God.” This covenant is everlasting, and can no more fail than God’s covenant made with Noah, that the waters of the deluge shall no more return to cover the earth; and, hence His protection is pledged to prevent any attempt from prospering, which shall be designed or directed against its existence or success.

* This verse is obscure in the original Hebrew, and is translated in the version authorized in the English Church, so as to accord with the succeeding verses; but even so, the general sense of the prophecy is not weakened. It may be right to state that the title of the chapter in this version, applies it to the Church of the Gentiles.

Now, my brethren, all this I am confident, is more than sufficient to prove, first, the exact connection between the old and the new dispensation, inasmuch as the latter was but the continuation and prolongation of the former; and, secondly, that a supreme advantage belongs to the religion which Christ came to establish, in its being taught and instructed by the Almighty himself, the Redeemer of His people. If, therefore, the principles which I have laid down are correct, on looking into the New Testament, we must necessarily expect to find such an institution as will exactly comprise within itself all the terms of this prediction, corresponding accurately to the means provided in the old law to teach mankind, and preserve from destruction the doctrines by God delivered. And I think, that if we diligently study the several passages of the New Testament, wherein our blessed Lord directs and describes the constitution of His Church or kingdom, we shall easily discover precisely such a continuation and such a provident scheme. Thus we are brought to the second portion of my theme, the direct testimony of God to the teaching of His Church.

Where can we better expect to find such a testimony, than in the very words wherein Christ conveys to His apostles and their successors His own supreme authority? For we read in the last verses of St. Matthew's Gospel, how, before He ascended into heaven, He called them all together, and addressed them in most solemn language, giving them His last and most special charge; and introduced this by a preamble wherein He should seem to allude to that testimony, which at the beginning of this discourse I described, that of His eternal Father, who commanded all to hear Him, as one in whom He was ever well pleased. Listen, I pray you, to this charge.

"All power is given to me in heaven and on earth.—Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And behold! I am with you all days, even unto the end of the world."

"I am with you, all days, even unto the end of the world!" What, my brethren, is the meaning of these expressions? There are two ways of reading the word of God. Nothing is easier than, upon perusing a passage, to attach to it that sense which best accords with our preconceived system, and seems best suited to confirm the doctrines which we have embraced. Now, in this way, according as we, or those who differ from us, read

these words, it is evident that there will be different meanings attached to them. For, the Catholic will say, that here a promise is clearly given by our blessed Redeemer, that He will assist his Church even to the end of time, so as to prevent the possibility of her falling into error, or of her allowing any mixture thereof with the truths committed to her charge. While we draw this important conclusion, others will say that the words imply nothing more than a mere protection and superintendence, a sort of security that the general system of doctrines and belief comprehended in Christianity shall never be lost upon earth. Others will perhaps conceive a promise to be here given to each individual member of the Church, that our Saviour will assist him in the formation of his system of faith.

Now it is evident that these different interpretations cannot be all correct, except so far as one may include the other. For that which we hold, does indeed comprehend that which the others propose, inasmuch as we believe that it secures that providential care and watchfulness which is the amount of their deduction, but with the addition of something more important, which their interpretation excludes. For these reject the truth of our explanation, otherwise they must needs adopt our doctrine. It is plain that there must be a certain criterion—a sure way to arrive at a correct knowledge of our Saviour's meaning; and I know not what rule can be better proposed, than the obvious one on every other occasion; that is, to analyze and weigh the signification of each portion of the sentence, so as to arrive at the meaning of the words which compose it; and then, by reconstructing the sentence, with the intelligence of all its parts, see what is the meaning intended by Him who spoke. And, for this purpose, we can have no better guide than the Holy Scriptures themselves. For, if we discover what is the meaning of words, by the various passages in which they so occur, as to be applicable to the interpretation of the one under examination, every one will agree that we have chosen the most satisfactory and plainly true method of settling the sense intended by our Lord.

We have a two-fold investigation to make; first, with the aid of other passages, to ascertain the exact meaning of the phrases in themselves: and then to see, in what relation they stand together, or, in other words, what is the extent of the commission which they imply.

1. In the first place, our Saviour says, that He “*will be with His disciples*,” all days even unto the consummation or end of the

word." Now, what is the meaning in Scripture of "God's being with any person?" It signifies a more especial providence in regard of that individual than is manifested towards others—a particular watchfulness on the part of God over his interests, in such a way, that what he undertakes shall infallibly succeed. This is the signification which this phrase always bears in Scripture. For instance, (Genesis xxi. 22,) Abimelech says to Abraham, "*God is with thee* in all that thou doest." It is manifest, that here was meant that the patriarch had special assistance and succor from God. In the 26th chapter, (v. 3,) God said to Isaac, "Sojourn in the land, and *I will be with thee*, and will bless thee." And in the 24th verse, the same assurance is repeated, "Fear not, *I am with thee*." Later, we hear the Almighty address Jacob in the same words—"Return into the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred, and *I will be with thee*;" (xxxi. 3;) and Jacob expresses himself in the very same terms—"The God of my father *hath been with me*;" (v. 5;) words which he himself explains of a special protection and defence, two verses later,—"*God hath not suffered him (Laban) to hurt me*." The peculiar providential care, which watched over the innocent Joseph, and made him ever successful, is recorded in the same phrase, with a sufficient explanation. Thus, (Genesis xxxix. 33,) we read,—"*And the Lord was with him*, and he was a prosperous man in all things, and he dwelt in his master's house, who saw that *the Lord was with him*, and made all that he did to prosper in his hand." And in the 23d verse, we read again, "*The Lord was with him*, and made all that he did to prosper." In the New Testament, the phrase is used in the same sense. "Master," says Nicodemus to our Saviour, "we know that thou art come a teacher from God: for no man can do these signs which thou doest, unless *God be with him*."*

To most of these texts, we have a paraphrase or explanation attached, which clearly defines the sense of the phrase to be, that any one with whom God was, He blessed and made to prosper in all things. Such, then, in the first place, is the definite meaning of that phrase in our text. In the ancient and authoritative Greek version of the Old Testament, commonly called the Septuagint, precisely the same words are used in rendering all the passages which I have quoted, as occur in the original text, in the place under consideration, of St. Matthew.

2. Christ then was to watch over His apostles, and use towards

them an especial providence, "all days to the consummation, *or* end, of the world." Here, again, a controversy arises regarding the meaning of the expression. The word translated "world"* has also another signification; it may mean the term of a person's natural life. Why not, therefore, adopt this meaning; and then the text will signify that Christ would be with His apostles so long as they remained upon earth? This suggestion must be judged precisely by the same rule as I laid down just now; and what will be the result? Why, that the word has sometimes the proposed meaning, but only in profane authors, and not in any single passage of the New Testament: for wherever it occurs, in this, it can be translated in no other way than "the world."

The only passage that can be brought to give plausibility to the other meaning, is Matt. xii. 32; where our Saviour, speaking of the sin against the Holy Ghost, says, "It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the next." Here it might be said, that "this world" means the term of a person's natural life, during which his sin might be forgiven him under ordinary circumstances; and therefore, the same meaning may be attached to the same word in the text under discussion. But a slight reflection will satisfy you that even in that passage the word has not the supposed meaning. For, as the sentence is antithetic, having yet that same substantive for both members, this must have the same meaning in both. Now, the "next world" cannot signify the term or duration of a natural life, but clearly signifies a future order or state of things. And therefore, "this world," which is opposed to it, must mean the present or existing order.

But, even this reasoning is unnecessary; for, allowing that in the alleged passage it had that meaning, it could not, by any analogy, have it in Christ's promise. For, it is acknowledged by the best commentators, that in every instance where the word is used in conjunction with the word "consummation,"† it unquestionably and invariably means "the world;" that is, the duration of the present state of things. In this sense it occurs, Heb. i. 2, and ii. 5; also 1 Tim. i. 17. In Matthew xiii. 39, 40, and 49 verses, we have it used in the compound form to which I have just alluded, so as to leave no alternative in determining its meaning. "The harvest is *the end of the world*. So shall it be *at the end of the world*: the angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just." The same expression is used by the disciples when they ask their Master, what should

* Αἰῶν.

† Συντέλεια.

be the sign of his coming, "and of the end of the world."* For, according to a Jewish notion, they confounded the destruction of the Temple, which it was supposed the Messiah would render imperishable, with the end of all things.

3. We have thus gained the meaning, and the only meaning, as given in Scripture, of another of our expressions. But it may be asked, is not this signification necessarily modified, and restricted to the apostles, by the use of the pronoun "you?" Can we suppose this pronoun to be addressed to the successors of the persons then present? Most undoubtedly; and first, because similar expressions occur in other parts of the New Testament. For example, when St. Paul speaks of those Christians who were to live at the end of the world, he uses the pronoun of the first person, which in extent of application, corresponds to the second. In the first Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xv. v. 52, he writes, "*We* shall be changed." And so again, writing to the Thessalonians. (1. iv. 16,) he says, "Then *we* who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up, together with them in the clouds." The pronoun here is applied to those Christians who shall be living after the lapse of many ages; and consequently, there is no reason why it should not be in our text, nor why it should restrict that only meaning which the phrase just now discussed—"the end of the world"—has throughout the Holy Scriptures.

But you must be aware, that in the giving of all commissions, a similar form of expression is necessarily used:—only the person present is invested with the authority, which has to descend to his successors; so that, if we admit the limitation in this instance, it will apply to every authority, jurisdiction, command, or power, assumed by any Church. For, on the dispensation, or orders, given in the Gospel to the apostles, their successors, whether real or not, in every Church, ground their claim to authority; much of it perhaps upon the terms of this very text. The Church of England demands obedience to her bishops, on the strength of passages clearly addressed to the apostles; those societies which dedicate themselves to the preaching of the Gospel, in distant parts of the world, pretend to rest their right and commission upon the very words, "Go teach all nations." It is consequently evident, that every class of Christians agrees with us, that the pronoun cannot form any limitation to this or any other similar passage.

* Matt. xxiv. 3.

Putting now together the various significations thus discovered for the phrases composing the text under investigation, we have the following plain interpretation of it: that Christ promised to watch with peculiar care and solicitude over, and exert his most especial providence in favor of His apostles; and that this care and providence would not be limited to the lives of those whom He immediately addressed, but should be unfailingly continued, through all successive ages to the end of time, in the persons of those who should succeed them.

But, you may perhaps ask, what have we hereby gained in favor of the infallibility claimed by the Church? For so far we have done nothing towards ascertaining what is the object and extent of this peculiar watchfulness and assistance. This important point remains to be discovered; and we will now endeavor, with the divine blessing, to reach it, by the same tests of truth.

On examining the practice of Scripture, we find that, when God gives a commission of peculiar difficulty, one which to those that receive it must appear almost, nay entirely, beyond man's power, He assures them that it can and will be fulfilled, by adding, at the end of the commission, "*I will be with you.*" As if he would thereby say—"The success of your commission is quite secure, because I will give my special assistance for its perfect fulfilment." A few passages will make this position quite clear.

In the 40th chapter of Genesis, 3d and 4th verses, God says to Jacob, "I am God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will make thee a great people. *I will go down with thee into Egypt.*" That is, "I will accompany thee, *I will be with thee*; therefore fear not." This assurance is added as a special guarantee for the truth of the promise, that the descendants of Jacob should be a great people. They were to become, by fulfilling the command given them, subjects of another state; their chances of becoming a mighty nation seemed greatly lessened, or rather quite at an end; yet God pledged his word that He would so protect them, as that the promise *should* be fulfilled; and this He does by adding the assurance, "I will go down with thee." But this application of the clause is still clearer in the book of Exodus, where the Almighty commands Moses to go to Pharaoh and free his people. He executes this commission! he who had been obliged to flee from Egypt under a capital accusation,—who was now not only devoid of interest at court, but was identified with that very proscribed and persecuted race,

whose extermination Pharaoh had vowed,—who, should he come forward, could only insure his own destruction, and the more certain frustration of the hopes which God had given to His captive people! How, then, does God assure him, that, in spite of all these apparent impossibilities, he shall be successful? “And Moses said unto God, Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And He said unto him, *I will be with thee.*”* The fulfilment is secure, no other assurance is given; Moses has the strongest guarantee which God can propose to him, that he will be successful. Again, when Jeremiah is sent to preach to his people, and considers himself unfit for the commission, God promises him success in the same terms, and with the very introductory phrase used in the commission given to the apostles, “and behold!” and with other no less extraordinary coincidences. In the first chapter of that prophet (v. 17, 19,) we thus read; “Gird up thy loins, and arise and *speak unto them all that I command thee: and behold!* I have made thee this day a walled city. . . . And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail, *for I am with thee*, saith the Lord.” Here is a command given, precisely such as we have seen delivered to the apostles, to tell the people *all that God had commanded*; and to it is appended the very same form of assurance as is addressed to them.

It will not surely be rash to conclude, that we have thus a clear rule or axiom,—not arbitrarily assumed, but deduced from the examination of similar forms of speech in other parts of Scripture,—that, whenever a commission is given by God to accomplish what appears impossible by human means, he guarantees its complete success and perfect execution, by adding the words, “I am with thee.” And if so, we have a right to conclude, that, in the text under examination, Christ, by the same words, promised to His apostles, and to their successors till the end of the world, such care, such a scheme of especial providence, as might be necessary and sufficient, to secure the full accomplishment of the commission given them. Nothing therefore remains, save to see what that commission is, and the case is closed.

“Go teach all nations;” such is the first part of the commission intrusted to the apostles. It comprises universality of teaching and governing, an authority and an influence beyond that

* Exodus iii. 11, 12

of the Roman Empire. How far above the reach of twelve poor Jewish fishermen! And further, what are the things to be taught? "*To observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you!*" How can they, dull, illiterate men: how, still less can their successors in remote countries and ages, hope to retain with accuracy or to teach with unfailing authority, *all and every thing* which our Lord has taught? This twofold commission is surely far beyond the power of man. Yet still it has to be fulfilled and will be, for Jesus Christ Himself has added to it these words of certain sanction: "BEHOLD I AM WITH YOU." Therefore the Church has ever been, is, and will continue till the end of time to be the universal instructor of all nations. Therefore her teaching will ever include "all things whatsoever" her Lord and Founder "commanded" to be taught, to the seclusion of whatever would confuse and vitiate the sum of His truth, or shake her authority.

I ask you, is not this a commission exactly comprising all that I have said we might be prepared to expect? Does it not institute an order of men to whom Christ has given security, that they shall be faithful depositaries of His truths? Does it not constitute His kingdom, whereunto all nations have to come? Does it not establish therein His own permanent teaching, in lieu of prophecy, so as to prevent all error from entering in? and is not this kingdom of His Church to last till the end of time? Now, here is all that the Catholic Church teaches, all that she claims and holds, as the basis and foundation whereupon to build her rule of faith. The successors of the apostles in the Church of Christ have received the security of His own words and his promise of "a perpetual teaching," so that they shall not be allowed to fall into error. It is this promise which assures her that she is the depositary of all truth, and is gifted with an exemption from all liability to err, and has authority to claim from all men, and from all nations, submission to her guidance and instruction.

Such is the first ground of the system which I endeavored to lay before you at our last meeting; but although I fear I have already trespassed too long on your attention, I am anxious, not indeed, to close the argument, but to finish the counterpart of what I represented to you in the first portion of my discourse, and for that purpose to refer to one or two other texts. I said then, that, even as, to fulfil the ends of prophecy, we might have expected to find Him whom the prophets typified, not only removing, but preventing error in the more perfect law; so might

we hope to find the Holy Ghost, who was the inspirer of the prophets, who moved their tongues and directed their teaching, in like manner substituting for them, His own infallible and unquestionable instruction. Now, we do find several texts of Scripture, connecting themselves clearly with what I have already said; and obviously pointing out an institution for this very purpose. For, in the 14th chapter of St. John, (v. 16, 26,) we hear our Saviour say, "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever; the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, nor knoweth him: but you shall know Him, because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you." "But, the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father shall send in my name, He will teach you all things." And again, in the 16th chapter, (v. 13,) "But when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He shall teach you all truth."

Here again are words addressed to the apostles. I know there are some who consider them as spoken individually, to all the faithful, and suppose them to contain a promise of inspiration to all. But we must be consistent; if you allow that these words contain a promise not confined to the apostles, but to be extended not merely to later ages, but to every individual, then you must not limit the other promise made to the apostles to the compass of their lives alone. It must be extended in the same degree, and be considered as given for the benefit of every future age. I just now remarked, that the two passages are clearly related one to another, for the object of both is the same—to provide for the teaching of truth. Not only so, but these words are addressed, in a peculiar manner, to the apostles; because it is said, that the Holy Spirit is to be the supplementary teacher to the Son of God, and will complete what He had begun; so that this guidance is clearly for those who had been already appointed and instructed by the Saviour himself.

Now, certainly, no one will say that the commission before discussed extended to all the faithful; for if so, all would be commanded to preach and teach, and then, whose duty would it be to listen and learn? It is manifest that it establishes two orders—one of superiors, of directors, of governors, of instructors; the other of subjects, of scholars, and of followers. The texts, too, now more immediately under consideration, taken in their context, lead to the same conclusion. For, in the same discourse, our Redeemer clearly distinguishes between the teachers of His doctrines, and those who, through their means, are to

learn them.* Thus do the two promises, joined together, afford the strongest proof of a constant security against error given to the Church of Christ, until the end of time, through the authoritative teaching of the successors of the Apostles, with the guarantee and sure co-operation of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit.

There remains another passage, containing words of our Saviour, which would deserve to be commented on at some length; I mean that interesting promise wherein, after basing His Church on a certain foundation, He says, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."† But I shall have occasion, some evenings later, to dwell more fully upon this text, because it is connected with the important doctrine of the authority of the Holy See; and I will therefore reserve it for my discourse on that subject.

But, having thus spoken of those promises and pledges which Jesus Christ gave to his Church, of unfailing protection and direction, may I not be met by other texts of a character apparently contradictory, such as must, if not destroy, at least neutralize, those which I have alleged? Are there not a series of strong passages in which, so far is the stability of the Church from being secured, that its total defection is foretold? Is there not to be a universal and awful apostasy from the truth as taught by our blessed Redeemer? Nay, still more, have not grave and learned divines placed these prophecies among the strongest evidences of Christ's divine mission, proved, as it is, in their fulfilment?‡

My brethren, in replying to this species of objection, I must be on my guard. I must avoid touching upon that view of it, however popular it may be, which pretends to see in the Catholic Church the foul characteristics attributed to the enemies of Christ in the Apocalypse, and other writings of the New Testament; and I must follow this course for several reasons. First, because, I would not profane the holiness of this place with the blasphemous calumnies which I should have to repeat, nor stoop to notice accusations, whereof it would degrade me in mind to think that they could be ever made but through a pitiful ignorance, or a lamentable prepossession. Secondly, because my plan does not allow me to seek out adversaries, but leads me to pro-

* John xvii. 20.

† Matt. xvi. 18.

‡ See Horne's Introduction, vol. i. p. 323. "We shall add but two more instances in illustration of the evidence from prophecy. The first is the long apostasy and general corruption of the professors of Christianity, so plainly foretold."

seed by an onward line of positive demonstration. Thirdly, because I cannot persuade myself that any of you who have so kindly continued to attend these lectures, listen to me with the impression that you are hearing the upholder of idolatry, or the advocate of antichrist.

Leaving aside, therefore, that class of applications, let us simply take and try the position, that a general defection from the truth is foretold in the New Testament; and that this prediction is even to be reckoned among the evidences of Christianity. Good God! and is it possible that any believer in the divinity of our Lord can assert so monstrous a proposition, as that He could have ever given such a proof as this of His heavenly mission and authority! I will present the case familiarly to you, in the form of a parable.—A certain king lived at a great distance from his children, whom he tenderly loved. They dwelt in a tabernacle, frail and perishable, which he had long and often promised should be replaced by a solid and magnificent abode, worthy of his greatness, and of his affection towards them. And after many days, there came unto them one who said, he was sent by him to raise this goodly building. And they asked him, “What evidence or proof dost thou give us that the King our father hath sent you, as fully qualified and able to build us such a house as shall worthily replace the other, and be our future dwelling?” And he answered and said: “I will raise a costly building, spacious and beautiful; its walls shall be of marble, and its roofs of cedar, and its ornaments of gold and precious stones; and I will labor and toil to make it worthy of him that sent me, and of me its architect, even so that my very life shall be laid out on the good work. And this shall be an evidence of my mission to the work, and of my approved fitness for undertaking it: that, scarcely shall it be completed but the lustre of its precious stones shall be dimmed, and the brightness of its gold shall tarnish, and its ornaments shall be defiled with foul spots, and then its walls shall be rent with many cracks and cranies in every part, and then it shall crumble and fall; and a few generations shall see the whole in ruins, and overspread with howling desolation!” And what would they reply unto him? “Go to,” they would say, “for a fool, or one who taketh us for such: are these the proofs thou givest us of thy fitness to build a house for our abode?”

And if so, my brethren, must we not call it almost impious and blasphemous, to suppose that our Saviour can have given, as evidence of His divine commission to establish a religion and a

church, that His work should not stand; but, after a few years, become disfigured with error and crime, and in a few centuries perish; or, what is worse, relapse into idolatry and corruption? For, let those who say that the whole Church fell away into idolatry, remember, that it was to overcome this foul usurpation of the devil, that Jesus Christ taught and preached, and suffered and died? and shall we dare to say that He conquered not? Shall we presume to assert that, after having wrestled with the monster, even unto the shedding of His priceless blood, and having crushed its head, and left it apparently lifeless, yet it did too soon revive, to assail and lay waste His inheritance, and tear up the vineyard which His hands had planted? Why, the weak and material prototype of His truth and law had more power of old! For, when the Ark of His Covenant was placed, even by the hands of His enemies, in the temple of Dagon, it not only overthrew the idol, but it broke off its feet, so that it might no more be replaced upon its pedestal. Even the false prophet of the East shall have proved more successful! For, so powerful is the dogma of God's Unity, that wherever the doctrines of Islamism have been proclaimed, idolatry has been banished, so as never more to have returned. And shall Christianity have proved feebler than they? shall it alone have been compelled to yield to the power of Satan? shall Jesus Christ alone have been baffled by His enemy, and unable to establish what he came to teach? Away from us such impious and ungodly thoughts!

But if these prophecies exist,—every one of which I unhesitatingly and solemnly deny,—have we not a right to expect some intimation of the glorious event which was to remedy the said defection? When God foretold, through his prophets, the captivity of His people, He always presented the balm with the wound, and cheered them with the prospect and certainty of redemption. And is it possible that such an event should be omitted in the annals of prophecy, as that return of the Church from universal idolatry, by its favored portion in the islands of the West,† which, at last, should give efficacy to what Christ and

* "So that clergy and laity, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees of men, women, and children, of *whole Christendom*, (a horrible and dreadful thing to think.) *have been at once drowned in abominable idolatry*, of all other vices most detested of God, and most damnable to man, and that by the space of eight hundred years and more,—to the destruction and subversion of all good religion universally."—Book of Homilies, (*Hom.* 8, p. 261, ed. of Soc. for Propagating Christian Knowledge.) pronounced in the 35th of the Thirty-nine Articles, "to contain godly and wholesome doctrine, and necessary for these times."

† Anastasius, speaking of Pope Celestine's liberation of our island from Pelagian

His apostles had in vain attempted to achieve? Then, with His spouse, the Church, how different is His conduct from His dealings with His stiff-necked people! She is left in total and cheerless darkness; she is only to be assured that she shall be degraded and defiled, without a word of hope that mercy will be ever again shown unto her! But no, my brethren; let us not be so inconsistent as to imagine such things, after the clear incontrovertible proofs which we have seen, both in the prophecy of the old law, and in the promise of the new; for, never will she be abandoned by God, any more than the earth shall be again desolated by a deluge;—and so far from the gates of hell thus prevailing against her, Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit of truth will teach in her, and abide with her, till the end of time.

And now, in conclusion, allow me to remark that, if any one will dispassionately look at the constitution of the Church, such as I endeavored to describe it at our last meeting, and have partially, although I trust so far satisfactorily, proved it to-night, it must seem to be precisely what, in the nature of things, we should expect to find it. For we cannot fail to observe, that the system pursued by the Almighty in every other case where it is His intention to mould or form men for any certain condition of mutual relation—where He intends to prepare their minds for any state requiring uniformity of purpose and of action, is to bring them into it through the principle of authority. On what principle has he grounded the domestic society, but on that of subjection and obedience? Is it not an instinctive feeling inherent in our nature, that the child who has to learn, could not do so unless a scheme of rule and of submission existed in the little republic of each family? And if he be not so placed under the instruction and direction of his parents, or other masters, and by them formed and trained to those domestic virtues which it is the intention primarily of domestic order to instil and perfect, does not experience prove that the mind will be untutored and wild, devoid of the best affections, and open to the occupation of every passion, and the dominion of every vice? And as the domestic virtues are the stock, whereon are ingrafted our social qualities, never could we expect that by any other system the youth of any country could be brought to the adoption of the same moral and social feelings and pursuits, than by the natural course of youthful discipline and restraint, whereby the mind

ism, thus expresses himself:—"Quosdam inimicos gratiæ, solam suæ originis occupantes, etiam ab illo secreto exclusit oceani."

gains that self-command and love of principle which can alone well direct it.

And is it not so, likewise, in the course followed by Almighty Providence for the preservation of social order? Who ever heard of a society held together but by the principle and tie of authority and lawful jurisdiction? Can we conceive men enjoying the benefits of the social state, acting towards one another on certain fixed rules and principles, united for the great purposes of public co-operation—be it for peace or for war, or for their mutual support in private life, or the great and more general wants of human nature—otherwise than when united upon a system of proper authority and control? And not only so, but must they not have among them a *living* authority, fully competent to prevent every infraction of the law, and to secure the state against the corruption which results from the private opinions of men?

And, although it may appear perhaps somewhat foreign to the subject, yet I cannot help making a remark connected with this observation: that such is peculiarly the nature of our own constitution. It is singular, that we have a letter addressed by one of the oldest popes to a sovereign of this kingdom, which, even if it be not allowed all the antiquity attributed to it, must yet be considered anterior to the conquest; in which he expressly says, that the constitution and government of all the other nations of Europe are necessarily less perfect than that of England, because they are based on the Theodosian, or an originally heathen code, while the constitution of England has drawn its forms and provisions from Christianity, and received its principles from the Church. It is remarkable that, perhaps, no other country has such a steady administration of the laws, in consequence of the admission into it of that very principle which corresponds to the unwritten or traditional code of the Church. For, besides the statute law of the kingdom, we have also the common law, that law of traditional usage now recorded in the decisions of courts, and in other proper and legitimate documents, precisely in the same manner as the Church of Christ possesses a series of traditional laws, handed down from age to age, written, indeed, now, in the works of those who have illustrated her constitution and precepts and demonstrated every part of her system, but still differing from the Scripture much in the same way as the unwritten differs from the written law. This may be sufficient to show how far from unreasonable our system is, and how

far remote from any tyranny, or oppression, or unjust restraint of men's minds, wherewith it is so often charged.

I trust, my brethren, that I have now shown you how consistent with sound reason, and how strongly confirmed in Holy Writ is the rule of faith which the Catholic holds, in the authority of the Church. I trust, too, that you will have seen how beautifully it harmonizes through all its parts, from one extreme to the other, so as to be worthy of being considered the work of God's hand. When you behold a majestic tree standing in the field, which has darted its roots far and deep into the earth, and spreads its branches wide around it, and produces, year after year, its store of leaves, and flowers, and fruit; you might as well imagine *it* to be the fashioning of man's hands, an ingenious device and artifice of his, which he feeds and nourishes, as suppose the same of the system I have described; which, as you have seen, entwines its roots through all the shadowy institutions of the elder dispensation, and, standing tall and erect in the midst of the new, defies the whirlwind and the lightning, the drought and scorching sun, burgeoning widely, and, like the prophet's vine, spreading its branches to the uttermost parts of the earth, and gathering all mankind underneath its shade, and feeding them with the sweetest fruits of holiness. For I have yet to show you much of its fairest graces and mightiest influences. Yes, and of it we may well exclaim, with Peter, in this day's gospel, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." Under its branches we have done well to make unto ourselves a tabernacle, where, with Moses and Elias, as the bearers of evidence from the old law, and with Jesus and his chosen apostles, as our vouchers in the new, we repose in peace and unit^y, in joy and gladness, in the security of faith, in the assurance of hope, and in the firm bond of charity.

LECTURE THE FIFTH.

THE CATHOLIC RULE OF FAITH FURTHER PROVED.

1 TIMOTHY, iii. 15.

"Know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the House of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and the ground of Truth."

HAD you, my brethren, seen the exact and finished design for some sumptuous building, such as it proceeded from the hands of one, all whose works are necessarily most perfect, and who has the power to accomplish whatever he designeth, and did you know that it had been put by him into the hands of zealous, and willing, and competent workmen, by whom it might, under his superintendence, be brought into execution, I am sure you would consider it superfluous to inquire whether the command had been fulfilled, and whether that which was so beautiful in its design was not confessedly more so, and endowed with ten fold perfection, when in work accomplished. Now, such, precisely, is the position wherein we stand with regard to the present inquiry. I have endeavored, by the simplest course possible, to trace out from the beginning the plan by Divine Providence manifestly laid down for the communication of truths to mankind, and for their inviolable preservation among them.

After having, in my preliminary discourses, explained to you the different systems adopted, by us and by others, regarding the rule of faith; after having shown you the complicated difficulties which arise incessantly in the one, and the beautiful simplicity and harmony which reign throughout the other; I endeavored, commencing with the very first and less perfect system adopted by God in His communications with man, to show you what would be naturally and necessarily required, to give at once consistency and perfect beauty to the course which He had commenced, and what would be necessary to give solidity and reality to the typical and symbolical method pursued of old. I essayed, also, with the clear and explicit words of prophecy, to construct, in a manner even before its appearance,

that fabric of religion which the Son of God came down from heaven to establish: and then, unfolding before you the Sacred Volume, I endeavored, to the best of my power, to discover the exact tally and correspondence between the two, to show how that which was most beautifully foreshown, was much more beautifully fulfilled; so that we might conclude it impossible to construct any other system, but that which the Catholic Church maintains and teaches, competent to fulfil either the prophecies of the Old Testament, or the institutions of the New.

And having thus, therefrom deduced what was the work placed in the apostles' hands, what the commission intrusted to their care, what the ground-plan on which they were to erect God's Church, it must, I am sure, appear an almost needless search, to ascertain how far these faithful followers and dutiful disciples carried into execution the plan committed to them for these purposes. But still, my brethren, it must be interesting, and useful, too, to follow the same course as I have begun, and, ever going simply forward in the form of historical investigation, see the full and final completion of that which had been foretold and instituted, and trace, in the conduct of the apostles and their first successors, clear evidences of the impossibility of any other rule of faith having then been adopted, save that which the Catholic Church maintains at present. And such is the simple inquiry through which I am anxious to conduct you this evening. The investigation will merely consist in the statement of a few historical facts; and I shall be careful to support it by what must be considered incontestable authority; indeed, to base it on such admitted grounds, as, I trust, will leave no room for cavil or objection.

Christ, then, in completion of the work which He had begun, gave a commission to His apostles to go forth and preach His gospel to all nations, with the injunction to teach them all things whatever He had commanded, and with a promise that He himself should assist them, and all those who succeeded them in their ministry, to the consummation of the world. Such a promise, as we saw by comparing those words of the New Testament with other passages of Scripture, leaves no room to doubt, that thereby was guaranteed the preservation of God's entire and complete truth in the Church of Christ, to the end of time.

In explaining the grounds of the Catholic rule of faith, I dwelt chiefly on those passages which expressly argued the supernatural assistance of God towards preserving His Church from error;

but I felt then, and I feel as yet, that I was far from doing ample justice to my subject. Nor can I even now, from the course which I have marked out for myself, and must necessarily pursue, supply my deficiency; but I must unwillingly pass over a great deal of strong confirmatory matter that should justly have come in to complete the views which I gave in my last discourse. I should, for instance, have dwelt upon those different commissions which our blessed Saviour gave to his apostles; where He appointed them the governors of His flock; and where, under different symbols of authority and power, such as giving them the keys of His kingdom, commanding them at discretion to bind and to loose, He bestowed upon them, as on another occasion you will see, great jurisdiction and authority over men. I might have led you to consider, how this principle of authority not only forms the basis and groundwork of faith in the Christian Church, but pervades its minor departments, in a descending, consistent scale of gradations, even into its inferior orders:—how, when any member of it becomes refractory, he was to be subject to an authority vested even in its smaller divisions;* and, above all, I should have dwelt at full length, on those important passages, wherein supreme jurisdiction is given to one; and so the very substruction and foundation-stone of Church authority is laid. But this will form hereafter the subject of a particular discourse.

I have rehearsed these examples, to show how argument upon argument might have been piled up before you: but, at present, I will content myself with recalling to your mind one or two texts, before only hinted at, and request your attention to them only for a moment. I allude to those passages in which Christ manifestly transferred His authority to His apostles—where He tells them that, even “as the Father had sent Him, so also does He send them,”†—where He says, “He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me.”‡ No doubt, the apostles well knew, and fully understood, the authority and sanction which He had from God to teach and enforce His doctrines; the sanction, not only of His Father, but of His own divine nature; and, therefore, when we find Him constituting them His vicegerents on earth, with the full deposit of truths come down from heaven in their hands, when we see them sent forth in such terms to preach and instruct, we cannot but understand how

* Matt. xviii. 17-19

† John x. 21

‡ Luke x. 16.

they must have felt themselves possessed of authority to teach, and to decide, and to exact homage from man's individual reason to their superior and divinely authorized instruction.

How, then, did the apostles go forth? what was the principle on which they conducted their instruction? In the first place, we do not observe that they on any occasion suggested the necessity of individual examination of the doctrines of Christianity. We find that they endeavored to narrow their proofs as much as possible; that they reduced them to one single point—their testimony to some principal evidence of their truth. Thus, for instance, the doctrines of Christianity were made to rest on the truth of Christ's resurrection; and we find that they were content with bearing witness to their having themselves seen Christ after he rose from the dead.* And although you may say that the miracles which they wrought were a motive which induced men to believe their testimony, yet is it no less true that the grounds on which they were believers was really the authority with which by miracles they proved themselves empowered to teach. It is necessary for you to retain a distinct idea of some observations which I made in my first, or opening discourse, on this important subject; for although, no doubt, a great many of the first believers were brought to give credence to the preaching of the apostles, in consequence of the miracles they wrought, it is nevertheless certain that their faith was not to be built on their miracles, but on the truth of the doctrines proposed to them by Christianity. After these motives had brought them to embrace it, there must have been a security given them that all the doctrines which would be proposed must be true. The very fact of its evidences being placed and accepted on so narrow a point as the demonstration of the resurrection, shows that a principle existed among them which secured the assent of the convert to all that should be taught him. This could only be implicit reliance on the teaching of his instructors—in other words, the Catholic principle of an infallible authority to teach.

We find not, in the second place, when they preached, the slightest intimation given by them that there was a certain book, which all Christians must study and examine, and thereon ground their faith. We hear them appeal to the Old Testament whenever they address the Jewish people, because therein were

* Acts ii. 32; iii. 15; v. 30, 32; xiii. 30; xvii. 31, &c.

truths contained which they clearly admitted, and which necessarily referred to the gospel for their completion, so as to serve for an easy guide and introduction to the demonstration of Christianity. But we never find the slightest intimation that the history of our Saviour's life, or the doctrines which they taught, were to be necessarily committed to writing, and thus proposed to the individual examination of the faithful.

Instead of this, we discover another much more important principle—and it is, that, wherever they went, they appointed persons to teach the flocks or congregations they had formed. Nothing can be more evident than that these persons had authority and power placed in their hands, as the means whereby they were to teach and govern. They are told not to allow any one to despise them on account of their youth; they are empowered to receive accusations, even against priests; and so early as this, the very conditions and forms of the judicature are established.* These things, primarily, indeed, appertain to discipline; but they show how, from the very beginning, the entire system of the Church was essentially based on the principle of authority and authoritative direction. Not so content, we find that the apostles gave the most minute instruction to those individuals, and to their Churches—not, indeed, to read the forthcoming word of God in the New Testament, when written, for it is not even hinted that it was ever to be so recorded—but to be careful in preserving the doctrines given into their hands.

St. Paul thus addresses his favorite disciple Timothy: "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy charge, avoiding the profane novelties of words, and oppositions of knowledge falsely so called; which some promising have erred concerning the faith."† That is to say, remember those doctrines which I have given you, lest they be perverted even in their words; take care to retain even correctness of expression in the teaching of what I have delivered to you, lest, by the oppositions of false knowledge, it be corrupted; in which words, St. Paul alludes to Gnosticism, or the earliest errors that crept into the Church. Now, had his idea been that the doctrines of religion were to be recorded in a book, and that the words of that book were to be the only text on which religion should be grounded; nay more, had he felt that in the very epistle which he was inditing, he was actually writing a portion of that new code, and consequently

* 1 Tim. iv. 12; v. 19

† 1 Tim. vi. 20.

had it in his power to prevent the danger of perversion, assuredly it would not have been necessary to inculcate with such care the preservation of even the words delivered. Moreover, observe, that he does not commit his doctrines to each individual in the Church, nor to its entire congregation collectively, but to one individual, whom he had clearly appointed to preside over it, as having to render an account to God for the souls of his flock.

Still further, he thus addresses him, "Hold the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me in faith, and in the love which is in Christ Jesus. Keep the good thing committed to thy trust by the Holy Ghost who dwelleth in us."* Here we have a beautiful recognition in practice of the teaching of the Holy Spirit of God, and the assistance of our Saviour, through the pastors of his Church; and the consequence is, that the immediate disciple and successor of the apostle is exhorted to keep exactly the very form of words in which this teaching is couched. Some have said, that the form of words here alluded to is the creed or symbol of the apostles. But, in the first place, we should have proof of this; secondly, the preservation of this could not require to be so energetically inculcated to a bishop then, any more than now; since the more it was taught, and the more it was made the property of the flock, the less chance there was of its being lost or altered. Here, then, we have the first step in a system of traditionary teaching—the delivery of the doctrine in words, by one sent primarily to preach them, to one whom he delegates to continue his work. Let us now see the next link in the chain. Timothy, after a few verses, is thus further exhorted:—"The things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others."† Once more, St. Paul does not say, "Treasure up this my epistle as a part of God's holy word, and give copies of it to those whom you have to instruct;" which surely might have appeared the safest way of preserving the doctrines delivered in it; but he tells Timothy to choose faithful or trustworthy men, and to confide the truths he had received into their hands, that they, in their turn, might communicate them to others. Is not this clearly assuming oral teaching as the method to be established and pursued by the Church of Christ?

Before quitting the epistles of St. Paul to his chosen disciples, I cannot refrain from calling your attention to one or two more texts, as appearing strongly confirmatory of the Catholic rule.

* 2 Tim. i. 13, 14.

† 1b. ii. 2

First, he says to Timothy: "I desired thee to remain at Ephesus when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest *charge some not to teach otherwise*; nor to give heed to fables and genealogies without end, *which minister questions* rather than the edification of God, which is in faith."* No dissent therefore is allowed, nothing which leads to questions, and diverts the mind from building up within itself the simple faith of God; and to prevent this was the principal object intended by St. Paul, when he appointed Timothy to preside over the Church at Ephesus. Now, suppose this to be the commission of all bishops, and that consequently proper means are placed by God in their hands to secure these objects, a simple test of experience would show us, which of the principles now adopted was the one to be used by Timothy. For surely experience must have shown, that if thus appointed to hinder dissent, with no other principles and no more power than even Episcopal Churches among "the reformed" admit, his means must have been sadly unequal to their purpose.† Whereas, similar observation will show that the bishops of the Catholic Church are effectually able to preserve unity among their flocks, by their authoritative teaching. In vain would the former *charge* their clergy or laity "not to teach otherwise," or to avoid topics "which minister questions," while the latter are secure that the danger is remote from their fold, and rule it without disturbance or dissension. Thus may we plausibly conjecture what was the rule which Timothy had to follow.

To Titus, the language of St. Paul is still more remarkable. "A man," he writes, "that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid, knowing that he, who is such a one, is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment."‡ I am not going to dwell upon the first portion of this text, so to justify the conduct of the Catholic Church towards those who broach error, and corrupt the purity of faith by innovations of doctrines; the argument to be drawn from this sternness of command against changes of doctrines, I leave you to your own reflections. It is the latter portion of the text which I consider for our present purpose most important. St. Paul, at that early age, when hardly any one could have been born and brought up

* 1 Tim. i. 3, 4.

† The dissensions which have burst out so flagrantly before the public in the Wesleyan Methodists' body would afford a ground for many interesting observations on the necessity of rule and authority in religion.

‡ Tit. iii. 10, 11.

in heresy or error, necessarily means by the word, *heretic*, one who, having professed the true religion, turns away from it to embrace new opinions, without relapsing into idolatry; for one who did this he would have called an apostate, and not a heretic. Now, of such a person, he tells us that he necessarily “sinneth, being condemned *by his own judgment*.” But in our days, if a person changes from one Protestant community to another, so far from its being considered sinful, or involving a necessary self-condemnation, it is thought that a man may be, and is generally therein *approved* “by his own judgment.” For this judgment, it is considered, is, and ought to be, his guide in matters of religion. The principle of Protestantism consequently is quite at variance with this awful doctrine of the apostle. For he supposes the existence of some internal principle, which necessarily condemns, in his own judgment, the man who abandons the truth. But this can only be a principle giving certain assurance that you possess the truth, a principle which convinces you that all you hold is correct; for only by abandoning such a principle, could you stand self-convicted by the change. The doctrine of St. Paul, in this regard, is precisely that of the Catholic Church. Putting aside the case of unwilling ignorance, no Catholic, who really possesses within him the principle and rule of faith, whereby he is united to his Church, can offend heretically against any of his doctrines, without his own judgment condemning him as a violator of those essential principles, and convicting him of a grievous sin.

From the instructions given by the apostle of the Gentiles to the rulers whom he appointed over his infant churches, let us turn to hear the exhortations which he directs to these. To the Thessalonians he thus writes; “Therefore, brethren, stand fast; and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word, or by our epistle.”* Here, again, we have mentioned the two species of doctrines, some written, but others unwritten; while both are placed exactly on an equal footing, so that both should be received by the Church with equal respect, and both be committed to the successors of the apostles. Upon perusing these testimonials, and seeing the principle of an oral teaching, with authority, thus prescribed, and at the same time observing the total silence on any thing like a written code of Christianity to be produced and substituted for it, can you hesitate for a moment as to the course pursued by the apostles, and the grounds

* 2 Thes. ii. 14.

on which they built their Church? Must we not conclude that an authority to teach was communicated to them, and by them to their successors, together with an unwritten code, so that what was afterwards written by them was but a fixing and recording of part of that which was already in possession of the Church?

But let us go a little farther into this consideration. I have said that we discover in the New Testament no hint or intimation whatever, that the Christian code was to be committed to writing; but, on the other hand, we see the apostles preaching the gospel, teaching Christianity to many foreign nations; and, according to ecclesiastical history, not only over all Europe, but to the furthestmost bounds of the east. St. Thomas, for instance, is said to have preached in the peninsula of India; St. Bartholemew carried the faith into parts of Scythia; St. Thaddæus into Mesopotamia; and other apostles into the interior of Africa. We have had learned treatises written, among them one by the present Bishop of Salisbury, to prove that St. Paul preached in this island, and converted the Britons.

It must be interesting to discover the principle on which they proceeded in converting and teaching those distant nations. Doubtless they based their doctrines on the true rule of faith, and took the proper means for these being well learnt and securely preserved in their respective Churches. Was the Scripture, then, the written word, this rule and foundation, and means of security? If so, we surely must have translations of this sacred book in the different languages of these nations. We have in some of them, as the Indian, works extant, written before the time of our Saviour; and is it credible that the first task of the apostles would not be to translate the Scriptures into them? the more as they had the gift of tongues, and could have done it without difficulty or error? If the presentation of the Bible to all men, and to each individual, be the first step to Christianity and its most vital principle, and if the only ground of faith be the personal examination of each article of belief, surely the only means for securing these requisites would not be neglected? Yet, the only versions of the New Testament that have come down to us are, the Latin one used in the west, called the *Vulgate*, and the Syriac translation.* Now, of the Latin Vulgate we do not know the origin. Probably it was written in the first

* I omit the Coptic or Sahidic version, as less important, and probably not so old as the other two.

or second century, but we have the strongest reasons to believe that, for the first two centuries, it was confined exclusively to Africa;* so that Italy, and Gaul, and Spain, countries whose language was Latin, used no Scripture, except the original Greek of the New Testament, and the Greek version of the Old; not a text in the vernacular tongue, such as the poor could understand—not that which could alone be read by the great mass of Christians. The Syriac version, in like manner, was known only to a small portion of the apostles' early conquests. Even of its existence we have no evidence previous to the third century, so that we have, perhaps, two centuries passing over without the Bible, or even the New Testament being in the hands of the eastern Christians.

But, what shall we say of our own country, which was in a manner separated from the rest of the world? We are told that, from the beginning, the Church of this country, so far from being in communion with the See of Rome, would receive nothing from it; that she always stood in fierce defiance and opposition to its mandates; that the British Church was apostolic, pure, and free from every error and corruption, which later times had introduced into that of Rome. Where, then, did it gain this knowledge of the pure doctrines of Christianity? There was no version of the Scriptures into the British language; none which the people could possibly read: and we must therefore conclude that all these pure doctrines, which are supposed to have existed in the early church of this island, must have been handed down by tradition. But this very circumstance excludes the idea of considering the Scriptures as the sole foundation on which the apostles built the Church.

Before leaving this early period of our investigation, let us see in what way one of the most ancient fathers of the Church confirms what I have said. I allude to St. Irenæus, the illustrious bishop and martyr of Lyons, who lived in the third century. Speaking of the necessity, or non-necessity of the Bible as the rule of faith, he thus expresses himself: "And had these apostles left us nothing in writing, must we not in that case have followed the rule of doctrine which they delivered to those to whom they intrusted their Churches? To this rule many barbarous nations submit, who, deprived of the aid of letters, have the words of salvation written on their hearts, and carefully

* See "Two letters on some parts of the Controversy concerning 1 John v. 7, by N. Wiseman, D. D." Rome, 1835. Let 2, pp 45-66.

guard the doctrine which has been delivered.* Even in the third century, then, according to this venerable authority, there were many Churches, which believed all the doctrines of the apostles, without having had the word of God presented to them in any written form which they could understand.

We must not conclude this portion of our theme, without, for a moment, examining what can have been the principle on which the apostles received converts into the religion of Christ. We read, in the Acts, of three or five thousand souls being converted in one day, and admitted into the Church, through baptism.† Does this fact possibly allow us to imagine that they were all instructed in detail in the mysteries of religion? By baptism, it was understood that they were received into perfect community with the faithful; and can we therefore suppose that all those whom the apostles at once baptised, had time to go through the minute examination of all the doctrines presented to their belief? The very words of Scripture itself are at variance with such a supposition, because it speaks of these conversions as having been instantaneous. But there must have been some compendious principle—some ground on which they were received into Christianity, which involved their acceptance, when taught, of whatever would be explained by those who had converted them; there must have been a summary and complete confession of faith exacted from them, which guaranteed their subsequent adhesion to every doctrine that should be taught; otherwise it would have been but a profanation of the solemn rite and sacrament of baptism, to admit men within the pale of the Christian Church, and yet leave them the option of retiring again from it, should they not be able to satisfy themselves that each of its doctrines was true. Now, imagine what you please, make what hypothesis you like, you can give no adequate solution, short of supposing implicit reliance on the teaching of the pastors of the Church,‡ which, in matters of religion, amounts to a belief in the infallibility of the teaching power; you must conclude it was understood, that whatever doctrines should afterwards be placed before them by their instructors, they were willing to re-

* Adv. Hæres. lib. iii. c. iv. p. 205.

† Acts ii. 41; iv. 4.

‡ This method was followed not merely by the divinely commissioned apostles, but by those no less who only had a delegated mission from them, and partook not of the high prerogatives and peculiar powers of the apostleship; as by Philip (Acts viii. 12,) who was only a deacon. This observation is important, as it shows the method to have been founded on a system, not merely on a reliance on the personal infallibility of the apostles.

ceive. And, in fact, we do find this to have been the case in practice: because, when the apostles subsequently made decrees, and published laws regarding the practice of the Church, wher they came to a decision on matters of belief and discipline, all the faithful submitted to those decrees; all the faithful revered them, not only as teachers, but as superiors, to whose authority they were obliged to bow. This admission explains at once the difficulty, and shows the principle on which the early converts were admitted into the Church. It was upon the understanding, and upon a sufficient pledge given, that they were ready to embrace the doctrines of Christianity, not because they had minutely and individually examined them; but because, satisfied of their first step being right, the belief in an authority vested in the apostles, they were willing, and obliged, to receive implicitly whatever might afterwards come from their mouths.

Apply this to the two rules of faith. Suppose a missionary arriving in a foreign country, where the name of Christ was not known, and advancing as his fundamental rule, that it was necessary for all men to read the Bible, and for each one to satisfy his own mind on all that he should believe. I ask you, not if you think it possible that thousands could be ever, properly speaking, said to be converted by one discourse, under such a principle, but whether, if the missionary conscientiously believed and taught this principle, he could, in one day, admit those thousands, by the baptismal rite, into the religion of Christ? Would he be satisfied that he had made true converts, who would not go back from the faith once received? I am sure any one conversant with the practice of modern missions will be satisfied that no missionary, except one from the Catholic Church, would receive persons so slightly instructed into its bosom, or be satisfied that they would persevere in the religion they had adopted. But *they* can do it at this day, and they have done it in every age; for St. Francis Xavier, like the apostles, converted and baptized his thousands in one day, who remained steadfast in the faith and law of Christ. And all may be so admitted at once into the Catholic religion, who give up belief on their own individual judgment, and adopt the principle that whatever the Catholic Church shall teach them must be true.

While, therefore, so far as from history and their own writings we can ascertain the conduct of the apostles, we find not the slightest proof that the Scripture, the New Testament, was to be the rule of faith, we see the course pursued by them necessarily supposing the Catholic principle of authority, and of infallible

teaching in the Church of God. We will now descend to a later period, and see how far the Church continued, in her earliest and best days, to act on the same principle. I am not now going to startle you by bringing forward the authority of tradition itself, in favor of the system which I have endeavored to explain and prove. I am not going to quote authorities for what I have said; but, by looking at the question only historically, and supposing that those who were the immediate successors of the apostles would naturally persevere in the methods enjoined by them, that they learned their way of instructing the Church of Christ from the same persons from whom they learned their faith itself, we may have in their conduct a confirmation of what I have advanced; and may further determine another important point in our examination; how far, that is, the methods followed by the apostles depended upon their peculiar privileges and personal authority, or were the result of a principle permanently instituted in the Church. For, if we find that the very same homage to authority in teaching was exacted by the successors of the apostles, and willingly paid by the faithful, we surely must conclude that this system was an integral part of Christianity, and the principle of faith which we have proposed, not a temporary one resting upon the apostolic character, but the essential groundwork of all belief.

Let us study the second and third centuries of the Church, the ages of martyrs and confessors, for then surely she was marked by no one spot or taint, nor can any imputation be cast on the purity of her morals or the integrity of her doctrines.

If, looking at those ages, we examine the method pursued in private instruction, or their belief regarding the evidences of Scripture, or, finally, their sentiments respecting the authority of the Church, we shall find precisely the same ideas, precisely the same method.

I. To begin, therefore, with the first; it is a well-ascertained fact, that, during the first four centuries of the Church, it was not customary to instruct converts in the doctrines of Christianity before their baptism. There was a certain discipline, popularly known by the name of the *discipline of the secret*, by virtue of which the most important doctrines of Christianity were reserved for the baptized. Persons who applied for admission into the Christian Church were kept, generally at least two years, in a state of probation. During that time they were allowed to attend in the Church for a certain portion of the service; but the moment the more important parts of the liturgy approached, they

were obliged to leave it, and remain without. In this way, until actually baptized, they were kept in ignorance of the most important dogmas of Christianity. There is indeed some controversy regarding the extent to which that reserve was carried; many suppose that the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation were communicated before baptism; others maintain that even these were jealously withheld from the converts until they had actually entered into the Church by baptism; so that nothing more than an implicit belief in Christianity was previously exacted from them. I do not mean to say, that this is my opinion; but I will show you, by and by, that it is the opinion of learned Protestant divines.

Let us now consider what were the motives which led to this discipline. It is supposed to have been grounded on several passages of Scripture, such as that where our Saviour warns his apostles "not to throw pearls before swine,"—not to communicate the precious mysteries of religion to those who were unworthy of them. Several hints, too, of such a system are thrown out in the Epistles of St. Paul, where he speaks of some doctrines as being food for the strong, while others are compared to milk, which may be communicated to infants in faith; and the unbaptized were, in the early language of the Church, called children, or infants, in comparison with the adult, or perfect faithful. It was deemed, therefore, expedient, and almost necessary, to conceal the real doctrines of Christianity from heathenish persecutors—not, indeed, from a dread of being treated with greater severity, but rather through fear of the mysteries being profaned and subjected to indecent ridicule or wanton curiosity.

Now, this being the object to be attained, upon what principle can the system have been carried into effect? Suppose, for a moment, that the principle of faith among these early Christians had been the examination of the doctrines proposed by their teachers in the written Word of God; and that the examination had to be carried on by each individual, with responsibility for himself, that he believed nothing but what he could satisfy himself was so proved. Suppose this to have been the principle of faith, how can it be reconciled with the ends of that system? The object of this was, to prevent exposure of the sacred mysteries, by betrayal from those who had been instructed in them. But if we suppose the principle just mentioned to have been followed by the Church, she exposed herself, uselessly, to a dreadful risk. Instead of at once proposing her doctrines to the

examination of the candidate for baptism, and, if he were not satisfied, allowing him to withdraw, we are to suppose that she preferred receiving such actually into her communion, leaving them, of course, the option of then retiring from it—not only the option, but the necessity of doing so, if they could not afterwards satisfy themselves of every doctrine proposed to them. This would have been defeating the very object in view; because, in this case, apostates, if ever there were any, would have been, necessarily, actual members of the Church, and practically acquainted with all its rites and sacraments; and the guilt of profanation would, in every instance, have been added to their treachery and apostasy. Unless, therefore, a sure pledge had been possessed after baptism there could be no danger, or moral possibility, humanly speaking, of dissatisfaction with any of the doctrines communicated, and, consequently, of any wish to draw back from Christianity: this discipline would have defeated its own object. Not only so, but it would have been an act of the greatest injustice; it would have been inveigling men into an unknown system, and, at the first step, exacting from them what every moralist must consider, under ordinary circumstances, essentially wrong—adhesion to doctrines or practices not explained to them, and of the correctness whereof they were not allowed to judge. Unless, therefore, there was some principle embraced by the catechumens, as they were called, before they were baptized, which gave a guarantee to the Church that it would be impossible for them to go back, no matter what doctrine, what discipline, or what practices should be subsequently imposed upon them—however sublime or incomprehensible the dogmas, or however severe the sacrifice they required of their feelings and opinions—unless there was a security to this extent before baptism—it would have been unjust in the highest degree—it would have been immoral, to admit them to it. Nay, more—it would have been sacrilegious; it would have been a conniving at the possibility of the sacrament being bestowed upon persons who had not, even virtually, the entire measure of faith, but had yet, on the contrary, the momentous duty to discharge, of studying their belief, and making up their minds whether or no they would accept those doctrines as scriptural, which the baptizing Church held and would propose to them.

There is only one principle which could justify and explain this discipline—the conviction of those subject to it that they would be guided by such authority as could not lead them astray; that in giving their future belief into the hands of those

that taught them, they were giving it into the hands of God; so as to be previously satisfied of a supreme and divine sanction to all the mysteries of religion that might afterwards be taught them. On this principle alone could security have been given, that, after being baptized, the new Christians would not turn back from the faith; and consequently, only by the admission of this principle as the groundwork of Christian truth, can we suppose the ancient discipline to have been preserved in the Church, or the practice of admitting persons so uninstructed to baptism, warranted or justified.

I will read to you one authority in support of all that I have said. It shall be a very modern one, and one which, in the Church of England, should be considered essentially orthodox. It is from a work published by Mr. Newman, of Oxford, only two years ago, entitled, "The Arians of the Fourth Century;" a work which has been, to my knowledge, highly commended and admired by many, who are considered well acquainted with the doctrines of that Church. The passage is more important, because it would bear me out farther than I have gone, and confirms what I before stated, that the great and essential doctrines of Christianity, were not, according to some, at first revealed to catechumens. In page 49, he says, speaking of them: "Even to the last, they were granted nothing beyond a formal and general account of the articles of the Christian faith; the exact and fully developed doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, and, still more, the doctrine of the Atonement, as once made upon the Cross, and commemorated and appropriated in the Eucharist, being the exclusive possession of the serious and practised Christian. On the other hand, the chief subjects of catechisings, as we learn from Cyril, were the doctrines of repentance and pardon, *of the necessity of good works*, of the nature and use of baptism, and the immortality of the soul, as the apostles had determined them." The only doctrines, according to this authority, taught before baptism, were the immortality of the soul, the necessity of good works, the use of baptism, and of repentance and pardon. No more than a general idea of Christianity was given; the important doctrines—I might say, the most important doctrines, for, by Christians of any denomination, these must be so considered—of the Trinity, and the Incarnation, and above all, that dogma which now-a-days particularly is considered the most vital of all, the Atonement on the Cross, were not communicated to the new Christian before he was baptized. But here comes an objection to this statement, and you shall hear its answer.

“Now, first it may be asked, how was any secrecy practicable, seeing that the Scriptures were open to every one who chose to consult them?” That is, if the Bible was in the hands of the Faithful, and they were supposed or recommended to read it, thence to satisfy their conviction; how was it possible to preserve these doctrines from observation? Hear now the answer. “It may startle those who are but acquainted with the popular writings of this day; yet I believe the most accurate consideration of the subject will lead us to acquiesce in the statement, as a general truth, that the doctrines in question have never been learned merely from Scripture. Surely the Sacred Volume was never intended and was not adopted to *teach* us our creed; however certain it is that we can *prove* our creed from it, when it has once been taught us, and in spite of individual producible exceptions to the general rule. From the very first, the rule has been, as a matter of fact, for the Church to teach the truth, and then appeal to the Scripture in vindication of its own teaching. And, from the first, it has been the error of heretics to neglect the information provided for them, and to attempt of themselves a work to which *they* are unequal, the eliciting a systematic doctrine from the scattered notices of the truth which Scripture contains. Such men act, in the solemn concerns of religion, the part of the self-sufficient natural philosopher, who should obstinately reject Newton’s theory of gravitation, and endeavor, with talents inadequate to the task, to strike out some theory of motion by himself. The insufficiency of the mere private study of Holy Scripture for arriving at the entire truth which it really contains, is shown by the fact, that creeds and teachers have ever been divinely provided, and by the discordance of opinions which exist whenever those aids are thrown aside; as well as by the very structure of the Bible itself. And if this be so, it follows, that when inquirers and neophytes used the inspired writings for the purposes of morals, and for instruction in the rudiments of the faith, they still might need the teaching of the Church, as a key to the collection of passages which related to the mysteries of the Gospel—passages which are obscure from the necessity of combining and receiving them all.”

Here, then, my brethren, we have an acknowledgment made, within these last two years, by a learned divine of the Established Church, that the Christians in early times were not instructed in the important dogmas of religion, until baptized; and he answers the objection that the Scriptures were then the rule of faith, by asserting that they were indeed employed by

the Church to *confirm* the faith which it taught, but were never considered as the only ground upon which faith was to be built. This is more than sufficient for my purpose;—it not only admits the premises which I have laid down, but goes as far as I can wish in the consequences it draws.

II. Thus much may suffice as to the method of instruction in the three first centuries: it was conducted on precisely the same principle as I explained in my last discourse. The next inquiry is, on what grounds the Christians of these centuries received the word of God. Did they consider the Scripture as the sole groundwork of faith, or, with us, as a book to be received and explained on the authority of the Church? You shall judge from the very few passages which I will read to you from their works; because it would detain you a great deal too long, if I entered fully into this portion of the argument. There is a remarkable saying on this subject of the great St. Augustine; for he is speaking of the method by which he was brought to the knowledge of Christianity. Disputing with a Manichee, one of a class of heretics with whom in early life he had associated himself, he says expressly, as it should be rendered, from the peculiarity of the style: “I should not have believed the Gospel, if the authority of the Catholic Church had not led or moved me.”* This little sentence declares at once the principle on which he believed. This greatest light of the century in which he lived, declares that he could not have received the Scripture, except on the authority of the Catholic Church!

See now the way in which St. Irenæus, the same father whom I before quoted, speaks on this point: “To him that believeth that there is one God, and holds to the head, which is Christ, to this man all things will be plain, if he read diligently the Scripture, with the aid of those who are the priests in the Church, and in whose hands, as we have shown, rests the doctrine of the apostles.”† That is to say, the Scripture may be read, and will be simple and easy to him who reads it, with the assistance of those to whom the apostles delivered the unwritten code, as the key to its true explanation.

Still clearer are the words of another writer of the same cen-

* Contra epist. Fundamenti op. to. vi. p. 46, ed. Par 1614, “Evangelio non crederem, nisi me Catholicæ ecclesiæ commoveret auctoritas.” Heraldu observes, that an Africanism here exists in the text, and *crederem* is for *credidissem*.—See Desiderii Heraldi animadv. ad Arnobium. Lib. 4, p. 54, or “Two Letters,” as above, p. 66.

† Ibid, l. iv. c. 52, p. 355.

ture: but I will first premise a few words regarding the peculiar nature of his work. I allude to Tertullian, the first writer in the Latin language on the subject of Christianity; and the father, consequently, who gives us the very earliest account of the methods pursued, in matters of faith and discipline, in the western Church. He has written a very instructive work, when considered at the present time, entitled "On the prescription of Heretics," that is, on the method whereby those are to be judged and convicted, who depart from the universal Church. The whole drift of his argument is to show, that they have no right whatever to appeal to Scripture, because this has no authority as an inspired book, save that which it receives from the sanction of the infallible Church; and that, consequently, they are to be checked in this first step, and not allowed to proceed any farther in the argument. They have no claim to the word; it is not theirs; they have no right to appeal to its authority, if they reject that of the Church, on which alone it can be proved; and if they admit the authority of the Church, they must at once believe whatsoever else she teaches. Go, he tells them, and consult the apostolic Churches at Corinth, or Ephesus; or, if you are in the west, Rome is very near, "an authority to which we can readily appeal," and receive from them the knowledge of what you are to believe.

I will quote to you one passage; and I might read you the entire work, and you would not find one doctrine differing from that which I have laid down on this subject. "What will you gain," he asks, "by recurring to Scripture, when one denies what the other asserts? Learn rather who it is that possesses the faith of Christ; to whom the Scriptures belong; from whom, by whom, and when, that faith was delivered by which we are made Christians. For where shall be found the true faith, there will be the genuine Scriptures; there the true interpretation of them; and *there all Christian traditions*. Christ chose his apostles, whom he sent to preach to all nations. They delivered his doctrines and founded Churches, from which Churches others drew the seeds of the same doctrine, as new ones daily continue to do. Thus these, as the offspring of the apostolic Churches, are themselves deemed apostolical. Now to know what the apostles taught, that is, what Christ revealed to them, recourse must be had to the Churches which they founded, and which they instructed by word of mouth, and by their epistles. For it is plain that all doctrine which is conformable to the faith of these mother Churches, is true: being that which they received .

from the apostles, the apostles from Christ, Christ from God; and that all other opinions must be novel and false.”*

Is not this, my brethren, precisely the very rule which the doctrine of the Catholic Church proposes at the present day? Does it not comprise every one of those principles which I have been striving for several successive evenings to explain? The doctrine of Tertullian is nowise at variance with that of other fathers; for, subsequently to him, we have plenty of writers, in both the Latin and in the Greek Church, who show that the grounds on which they proceeded were precisely the same. I will content myself with quoting two passages, one from each of these Churches.

The first is from Origen, one of the most learned men in the early ages of Christianity, a man of philosophical mind, and fully able to detect any flaw of reasoning, had it existed, in the train of argument advanced in demonstration of Christianity. “As there are many,” he writes, “who think they believe what Christ taught, and some of these differ from others, it becomes necessary that all should profess that doctrine which came down from the apostles, and now continues *in the Church*. That alone is truth, which in nothing differs from ecclesiastical and apostolical tradition.”† Again: “Let him look to it, who, arrogantly puffed up, contemns the apostolic words. To me it is good to adhere to apostolic men, as to God, and his Christ, and to draw intelligence from the Scriptures, *according to the sense that has been delivered by them*. If we follow the mere letter of the Scriptures, and take the interpretation of the law, as the Jews commonly explain it, I shall blush to confess, that the Lord should have given such laws.—But if the law of God be understood as the Church teaches, then truly does it transcend all human laws, and is worthy of him that gave it.”‡

And in another place: “As often as heretics produce the canonical Scriptures, in which every Christian agrees, and believes, they seem to say, Lo! with us is the word of truth. But to them (the heretics) we cannot give credit, nor depart from the first and ecclesiastical tradition: we can believe only, *as the succeeding Churches of God have delivered*.”§

One short passage more, from St. Cyprian, and I will close this portion of my argument. In his treatise on the unity of the

* De præscrip. hæretic. p. 334, ed. 1662.

† Pref. Lib. 1. Periarchon, T. 1. p. 47. Edit. PP. S. Mauri, Paris, 1733.

‡ Hom. vii. in Levit. T. 11. pp. 224–226.

§ Tract. xix. in Mat. T. iii. p. 864.

Church—a treatise entirely directed to prove that unity or oneness of faith, is the essential characteristic of the Church, and, that unity of faith, unity of government, and unity of communion, are to be preserved by unity of rule—he thus writes: “Men are exposed to error, because they turn not their eyes to the fountain of truth; nor is the head sought for, nor the doctrine of the heavenly Father upheld. Which things would any one seriously ponder, no longer inquiry would be necessary. The proof is easy. Christ addresses Peter: *I say to thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. . . .* He that does not hold this unity of the Church, can he think that he holds the faith? He that opposes and withstands the Church, *can he trust that he is in the Church?*” The Church here alluded to is that which is in communion with St. Peter, that is, as appears from many passages in his writings, that Church which is in communion with the See of Rome.

So far, therefore, the principle followed both in private instruction, and in the more universal teaching through the Church, at least when she discussed or explained the grounds of her belief in Scripture, was, evidently, the same which we receive, that is, the infallible authority of the Church, assisted by God.

III. There is another point, closely connected with the foregoing, and more directly belonging to the public teaching of the Church: and that is, the method pursued by it when united together, to define any doctrine of faith. Now, nothing can be more certain than that, when opinions, deemed erroneous, arose in the Church, the only method followed was, to collect the authorities of preceding centuries, and ground thereon a definition or decree of faith; and that the adversaries of the dogma, without being allowed to define, to argue, or to defend their opinions, were called on to subscribe some formula of faith, contradictory of their errors.—The first and most signal example of this was, the first general council after the apostles, that which was convened against the doctrines of Arius. It is extremely remarkable, that when the council is enacting canons or rules of discipline, it prefaces them by saying, “it has appeared to us proper to decree as follows.” But, the moment it comes to state the decree or doctrines of faith, it says—“The Church of God teaches this”—not the word of God, not the Scriptures, but the Church of God teaches this doctrine; and because the Church of God

teaches it, all who are present, and all the bishops over the world, must subscribe to it.

No one, I should conceive, could possibly persuade himself that this council of the entire Church met with any other idea, than that it had a power of uttering a binding and final decision. We cannot, for a moment, imagine that three hundred and eighteen bishops from the east and west, among whom were aged men, who had drunk of the Lord's chalice, by undergoing, in by-gone days, the torments of persecution, would have met together, at much cost and with much trouble, for no other purpose, than to give an opinion, subject afterwards to the judgment of every private individual; or that they believed themselves convened for no object but such as every member of the Church was equally competent to effect; or for any work which he would still be obliged to do. Yet to such inconsistent assertions as these, divines are driven who deny the infallibility of the Church, but maintain the responsibility of each individual's judgment; whereby they constitute each member of the Church the judge over all its collective decisions. This has actually been done; and, as a specimen of this reasoning, I will quote the Protestant Church historian, Milner. After giving an account of this general council of Nicea, he thus comments: "It behoves every one, who is desirous of knowing simply the mind of God from his own word, *to determine for himself how far their interpretation of Scripture was true.*"* So that every person had to judge whether the council was right or wrong, by doing what he could have done just as well if the council had never met, by discovering, that is, through his own study of Scripture, whether he should adopt or reject the doctrines of Arius'. Surely, such a theory would sound strange, if broached of the supreme legislative council of any state!

The principle followed on this occasion was continued in every subsequent council of which we have any notice in ecclesiastical history; and that principle and method, again, suppose the same ground as all the preceding examination has exposed. They assume, that the moment the explanation of the different Churches was found to agree on any point of faith, that must necessarily be true, and no appeal was to be allowed--no argument admitted, that might seem directed to set aside that ground of authority.

And, undoubtedly, we find very few of those who, in the first

* History of the Church of Christ, vol. ii. p. 59, ed. 1810.

centuries, ventured to wander from the universal Church, who did not attempt to show that they had tradition in their favor, and that the fathers of the preceding centuries thought with them. In the fourth and fifth centuries, the great era of ecclesiastical literature, we see the fathers taking pains to ascertain, collect, and preserve the opinions of those who had gone before them.

From these writers, innumerable passages might be brought to prove the universal admission of this our rule. Such, for instance, are the words of St. John Chrysostom, when commenting on the words of St. Paul to the Thessalonians: "Hence," he writes, "it is plain that all things were not delivered in writing, but many otherwise, and are equally to be believed. Wherefore let us hold fast the traditions of the Church. It is tradition: let this suffice."* Or those of St. Epiphanius, when he says: "Our boundaries are fixed, and the foundation, and the structure of faith. We have the traditions of the apostles, and the Holy Scriptures, and the succession of doctrine and truth diffused all around."† But passing over detached passages, and omitting to dwell even upon the triumphantly Catholic writings of Vincent of Lerins upon this express subject, I will only call your attention to a principle laid down by St. Augustine, and other fathers, which can leave no doubt regarding *their* belief. It is this: that, so far from considering it necessary to be able to trace back every point to the time of the apostles, if any doctrine is found existing now, and in times past, through the Church, the origin of which cannot be discovered, it must be deemed to have come from the apostles. Thus writes St. Augustine: "What the whole Church observes, what was not decreed by councils, but always retained, is justly believed to be of apostolic origin."‡ Such a principle surely implies a conviction that the Church can never fall into error.

It would therefore appear that, coming downwards from the time of the apostles, we find no other principle acted upon in the Church, either in private, as regarded individuals, or publicly, in proposing the Scriptures, and in the definition of doctrines, except that which we admit—an infallible authority in the Church of Christ.

After this, we come to another, and a very remarkable period, generally considered as one of darkness, error, and supersti

* Hom. iv. in 2 Thessal.

† Hær. iv. Tom. i. p. 471.

‡ De Baptismo cont. Donat. lib. iv. c. xxiv.

tion—the time when many fancy that all the doctrines of Christianity had been already corrupted, and that the Church could no longer pretend to claim any part in the promises of our blessed Redeemer to his apostles. But it is remarkable as the great age of conversion; for any one conversant with ecclesiastical history will be aware, that between the seventh and thirteenth centuries, the greater part of northern Europe, and considerable tracts of Asia, were converted to the faith; and every one of these countries, with hardly any exception, was converted by missionaries sent from Rome.

Here we may expect to find a very interesting and accurate test of the rule of faith, by seeing where Christ's commission to teach all nations has been fulfilled; in other words, where the blessing of God has rested, in regard of one important portion of the work confided to the Apostles. For I think we should have reason to conclude, that in that Church hath the promise of God's presence and of a true teaching been best preserved, in which the command to teach all nations has best and most effectually been fulfilled. For, as one individual blessing, and one promise, is given to both charges, and neither could be executed without it, when one part can be proved to have it, the other may be safely assumed likewise to possess it. But I consider this inquiry of such importance, and think that it will admit of so many interesting details, that I will pass over it for the present, and reserve, until Friday and Sunday evenings, a minute examination of the methods followed in converting, by the two Churches; that is, by the Catholic Church, and by the collection of different sects, collectively known by the name of Protestant, and of the success which has attended each.

I proceed, therefore, at once, to what I consider necessary for the full development and explanation of the matter in hand this evening. So far, I have treated of the methods pursued in the early Church for instructing her children and preserving the faith. But an important question may rise in the minds of some—Were not these methods totally unsuccessful? The Church may, indeed, have professed from the beginning to follow our principle; and it may be that, during the first ages, it mattered but little whether it was correct or not; since the seeds of Christianity cast by the Apostles had still sufficient vigor to produce fruit, in spite of corrupt principles; but has not the consequence been, that, in course of time, the grossest errors have been introduced into the Church of Christ? Is it not true, that the Church of Rome, in particular, has fallen away from the

truth into a state of frightful apostasy, and has disgraced Christianity by many absurd and impious doctrines?—Such is the view presented, with many varieties, in popular works.

I was careful, in my opening discourse, to caution you against such a line of argument as this. I endeavored to point out the necessity of discussing principles and not facts, which, after all, must be referred to principles; I showed you that it was an assumption of the question in hand, to maintain what are commonly considered abuses to be such on the grounds whereon they are so represented. And here allow me, first, to observe, that nothing is more open to misrepresentation than this portion of the inquiry. For an important distinction is generally overlooked, by those who thus speak and write, between doctrine and discipline. Many practices which the Church may have introduced at any time, and which she could alter to-morrow if she pleased, are treated by them as points of faith; it is assumed that they are defended, not as matters of expediency, but as coming from the apostles, or from divine tradition. This distinction should be borne in mind, whenever you hear of the pretended corruptions of the Catholic Church. If such things are mentioned, insist at once upon proof that these are *doctrines of faith* in the Catholic Church—insist upon proof that the Church teaches you them on the same ground as she teaches the doctrines of the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, or the Incarnation; and if you cannot find express proofs brought to that extent, you must not allow an argument to be brought from them to show that she has lost any portion of that deposit of faith which was originally given to her.

In the second place, as I formerly remarked, there is generally, in such cases, an assumption of the point in dispute. For example, what is the method very often pursued in attacking the doctrine of auricular confession? It is not found in Scripture; therefore the Church has erred, by adopting a doctrine contrary to faith. Are you not here assuming as the very basis of the reasoning, the very question under discussion? You are endeavoring to prove that tradition is not a sufficient rule, because, by its use, errors have crept into the Church. You are asked to specify some such error, and you give that example; and when called upon to prove, what is essential to your argument, that it is an error, you prove it on the ground that it has no authority but tradition! Can any reasoning be more vicious than this? The fact is, that all questions of difference between us and any other Church must rest on this one point, must turn on this one pivot

--has Christ instituted in his Church an authority to teach, and has he guaranteed the preservation of truth in this authority, to the end of time? If that be made good, we must believe that whatever that Church, following it down the stream of time, has taught, must be received as truth; and consequently no ground can be given on which a separation from her communion could be justified. If, on the other hand, you shall find the other rule as explicit and clear as that which I have proved, and the texts for excluding church authority, and making the Scripture the sole rule of faith, as strong and as well explained in Scripture as those which I have quoted, then you may suppose that we are corrupt in every article which is not clearly defined in the written word. But upon this point alone must all controversy turn; if we prove our foundation true, whoever differs from us, however extraordinary the doctrines we teach, in rejecting them, rejects the authority of Christ.

Let us probe this matter still deeper. The Church of Rome, it is said, fell into grievous corruption: and it was necessary to reform it, or perhaps even to separate from it. Now, here comes a very important consideration. It would seem, that in Christianity, due provision should have been made for its most essential wants. You saw how, in the old law, there was an order of prophets established from the days of Moses; for God expressly foretold that, from time to time, he should send prophets to correct errors, and to give his people rules by which they should be guided. He thus made provision against the prevalence of error, and for the reformation of any fatal or serious abuse that might gradually creep into His kingdom. But, if you deny the principle of an infallible authority in the Church of Christ, if, in other words, you reject that course of reasoning which I have pursued to prove how the Catholic principle of Christ's teaching in his Church exactly corresponds to the institution of prophecy, and if you do not admit any other provision for the removal of error, you necessarily place Christianity on a lower scale of perfection than the ancient law; you leave it unfurnished with what was necessary of old, and what must be equally necessary at present. Can you conceive the Almighty establishing a religion as the sole and final revelation which man was to receive till the end of time, and yet appointing no means and making no provision for the removal of error, if it should ever insinuate itself among his truths? Can you conceive that, in the judgments of His providence, the whole system of Christianity was doomed to fall into a state of absolute corruption, and yet that He never

should have pointed out a way whereby that corruption was to be cured, or whereby individual man was to be prevented from falling into it? Yet, if you look into the whole of the New Testament, can you tell me where there is a provision for this important object? And if the Church was to be so long in the state of degradation and moral corruption described by so many writers, can you conceive it possible that there was not some resource reserved for her, some indication given of a method to be pursued in this last extremity, to recover her from that frightful condition? There is not a word, not the obscurest hint of such a remedy—the case is not contemplated as possible—so that we must imagine the wisest provision to have been made in the old law, which, though doubly necessary, was totally overlooked in the constitution of the new.

But if you will still say that the Church fell into grievous errors in faith and morals, at some time or other, I will ask you to determine the date when this occurred. There are only two opinions, on this point, that have in them any semblance of consistency or reason. The first is one which I have heard sometimes advanced, that it was precisely at that very Council of Nicea, in which the divinity of Christ was defined, that the Church first erred from the faith. And this hypothesis was maintained on consistent grounds; namely, that the dogmas of faith were then defined on the authority of tradition, whereby a different rule of faith than Scripture was introduced into the Church. So that we are to suppose that, within three hundred years after Christ, the Church sank into a state of absolute error and fatal corruption, and remained in that condition twelve or thirteen centuries, before Luther and Calvin undid the evils of the three hundred and eighteen Fathers of that venerable synod, and the Reformation restored the real rule of faith! Is it possible to believe such a hypothesis as this? Will any one persuade himself that the very moment God crowned His Church with glory, and gave her rest, after three hundred years of persecution,—her return was, to abandon His law, and follow, instead, the corruptions of men?—that the very first time she assembled to vindicate the honor of His Son, and proclaim His divinity, she by the very act forsook and denied Him, and corrupted her vital and fundamental truths?

Others place this epoch at the other extremity of the chain; and say, that they cannot consistently fix the corruption or apostasy of the Church of Rome at an earlier period than the Council of Trent; in other words, after the Reformation had

already commenced: so that, whatever her errors or corruptions previously were, she was still the true Church of Christ until that moment. Now, all, however opposed they may be to our dogmas, must acknowledge that no new doctrines were introduced into the Church between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries: so that, for at least three or four centuries, the Church must have been in a state of absolute and fatal error, and in her was no energy or power to raise herself from that state. Then, if that power came three centuries later, on what was it founded? Was it on any new development of the principle of faith by our Saviour given, with efficacy to shake off the errors and corruptions of man? If there was that power and inward virtue in the Church to restore herself to purity, how comes it that three or four centuries were suffered to pass over without her being able to exert it? Was it that Divine Providence did not let loose the spring which was to give tone and action to that virtue? But if the sum of corruption had reached its accumulating height already, why was not this energy called into activity? Necessarily, there cannot have been any latent virtue in the Church, if it so long remained dormant when so much needed. There must surely then have been some extraordinary grant of power at that particular moment: and when you come to say, that any thing of this sort, not mentioned in the Bible, was essential to the Church, I ask you for another order of proofs. For, when men are sent out of the ordinary line of Providence, it has ever given them a means to show that they were so sent; and if there was a peculiar authority given to some men at that period, I wish to know on what that authority was based.

Thus you see how the two opinions mutually throw the whole argument into our hands. For, on the one hand, some assert that the first general council after the time of the apostles, was the first to corrupt or abandon the rule and standard of faith. These say, therefore, to the others: "If you do not agree with us in placing the defection at the first general council, if you do not allow the first step in the assumption of authority here taken to have been fatal, where will you stop? If you admit the authority of the Church to define articles of faith in the first council, can you refuse it to the second or to the third? and thus, the Catholics may go on from one to another, till the Council of Trent; which, having been convoked in an exactly similar way with the others, can on no just or consistent reason be condemned or rejected."

Then the others reply, that it is too frightful an admission to

be made, that the spouse of Christ should have been so soon divorced from him, that the succeeding ages, the times of the Augustines, the Jeromes, the Chrysostoms, the Basils, should be ages of sinfulness and error, that the visible Church should so soon have ceased to exist, and the blessings of salvation have been so soon withdrawn from the earth ; yea, at the very moment when God seemed to have ordered the ways of his Providence for their greater diffusion. Yet, finding no intermediate space whereon to rest, they determine that the Church in communion with Rome was the true one, in spite of error and corruption, till at Trent she sanctioned her doctrines.

But, before leaving this opinion, I must make one more observation. It has become a very fashionable theory of late, to abandon the plan of denouncing the Catholic Church as corrupt and antichristian for so many ages, and to allow it to have been the true Church, till the sanction of the last council fixed and consecrated the supposed errors, which, till then, had merely floated in her ; and thus it is said, that they who adhered to the council, separated themselves from the Church, and became schismatical.* But they who make this argument, forget that the dogmas which they consider to have been fatally defined at Trent, had most of them been already decreed and sanctioned in other councils ; that the books which they reckon among the Apocrypha, the seven sacraments, and many other such points, had been clearly defined at Florence, in 1439 ; confession, at the council of Lateran ; the corporal presence of Christ in the Eucharist, in the synods against Berengarius ; and other doctrines, in the celebrated epistle of Pope Nicholas I. to the Bulgarians, which the Church had received. So that, if the definition of these doctrines constitutes the pretended schism of the Catholic Church from those who accepted not her definition, that is to say, from a small remnant in the north of Europe, it follows that the entire Church had apostatized at the previous decisions,—and had left none standing in her place, for all assented to the decrees ; and thus the Church had completely failed, which is the

* See the conclusion of Newman's "Arians of the Fourth Century." The Rev. M. O'Sullivan, a few evenings ago, delivered an anti-catholic sermon, in the church of St. Clement's Danes, the entire drift of which was to show that *Popery*, or the *Romish religion*, was only introduced by the creed of Pius IV. This doctrine must appear very consoling and edifying to Protestants of the present day, when they consider how they have been stunned with outcries about the total corruption of the Church for ages before, and the Pope's being antichrist : or when they compare it with the assertions of the Book of Homilies.—See above, p. 104.

difficulty whereof the asserters of the hypothesis wish to keep clear.

Thus, whatever step you take, in either supposition, you are involved in difficulties which are irreconcilable with the truth. The fact is, there is only one consistent view, and that is, to believe that the very principle adopted by the apostles has continued for ever in the Church, down to the present day—that in her lives and reigns the Holy Spirit of Truth, and the teaching of Christ, through their successors, which will not allow her to fall into any fatal error.

I can hardly believe that a Christian of any persuasion, if desired by one yet unconvinced to give a historical sketch of Christianity, that so he might ascertain whether an all-wise God had kept guard over it, as a thing dear to Him, and worthy of His wisdom and power, would induce himself to give such a poor and miserable picture of its lot as the system opposed to ours must conceive. He might, indeed, without shame, describe the life of its divine founder; how, in infancy, He suffered cold and poverty and every privation, and was obliged to fly when his life was sought; how He led a life of obscurity, sorrow, and wretchedness; how He was in the end mocked, and scoffed, and tortured, and crucified; for all these sufferings were amply compensated by the glories of His resurrection, and the majesty of His ascension, and the brightness of His present state; and through them all He proved himself the holy and the just One, and for them all the Lord God hath made Him see a long generation and a fruitful inheritance. But surely he would not dare to attempt a parallel with the history of his spouse, the Church, and say how she, indeed, like Him, was at first little, and poor, and persecuted, and neglected, and how princes did thirst for her blood, and in part spilt it; and how, too, prophets bore her in their arms, and saints sighed after her full manifestation: but that, as she grew up, she plunged into every excess of wickedness, and harlotry, and blood, and clothed herself with all the abominations that ever disgraced idolatrous nations; and that, at last, after ages of such filthiness and abominations, she rose, not indeed like her author, every limb clothed with new suppleness, and vigor, and beauty, and her head crowned with fresh, unfading glories, and her youth, as the eagle's, renewed, but rather like the spurious vegetation said to sprout from the decayed mangroves on the rivers of Africa, as though a few branches had revived with a different life, while the trunk has remained as yet a mass of corruption and decay. Or, rather, he

would not describe it like one of those very rivers, appearing first as a broad, majestic stream, issuing from a pure, untainted source: sweeping along in increasing strength, bearing down, by the calm power of its steady course, the petty obstacles which nature and man raised in its way; carrying on its waters the arts of peace and happiness from people to people, and establishing a communication between many countries unknown to each other, save through its means: then suddenly swallowed up by the thirsty desert, and changed, for a long space, into brackish marshes and noisome pools, till from these issues again a small, puny stream, which pretends to mark its continuation, by its insignificant current, over some confined tracts of the habitable globe.

No, rather he would love to represent it as a noble edifice, richly adorned as befits God's temple, the lustre of whose golden ornaments may have been sometime dimmed by neglect, whose decorations may have suffered from mildew and rust, but whose foundations are based on the eternal hills, and may not be shaken by the earthquake or the storm.

And such have we regarded it in all ages, as the great universal Church, towering above all other objects: even so, as in this country, you may see the splendid cathedrals of antiquity majestic among the petty edifices, sacred or profane, which have been built and rebuilt, and have again crumbled into dust around them; while they look down unaltered and unchanged, as they did of old, forming a striking and beautiful feature wherever they are placed.

And, surely, if we have recourse to the results of experience, we shall easily ascertain which system of faith is more conformable to God's institution; that wherein man is left to his own erring judgment without a guide, or the one where the doctrines of Christ are supposed to be preserved in a durable and consistent scheme, by being embodied with outward forms, in the safe keeping of an unfailing and living body. For, if you wish to preserve some precious odour, you expose it not abroad in its pure ethereal essence, knowing that thus it would soon evaporate and waste away; but you do rather knead it up with something of more earthly mould, which may be unto it, as it were, a body, whence it may long breathe its perfume to all that approach. And just so must it be with a religious constitution; for hath not experience taught us, at least, how the attempt to spiritualize it to the extreme, depriving it of outward circum

stance, and abandoning the principle of authority, must end in its gradual enfeebling and final decay?

Do we not all know a Church possessed of every material engine of power, that hath in its hands most glorious temples, marvellously designed to be the theatres of boundless influence over countless multitudes? And such were they once; while now they are all day so empty and waste as to seem rather the mighty tombs of a departed, than the temples of a living worship. And how else hath this sad change been wrought? The religion which built them, in ages past, was one of many sisters, obedient and subject to a common mother. For centuries she had ruled by authority, spiritual and ecclesiastical, and her reign had been peaceful and splendid. But a froward spirit arose within her, and, in the pride of her heart, she exclaimed: "I need not, that men may honor, and court, and obey me, these badges of authority and rule, which, at the same time, mark my dependence too. For my own comeliness will I be worshipped. I will none of those touching memorials around me, the tombs of martyrs, or the rival beauty of saintly images; for what are they to me? or what have I to do with the memory of past days? I scorn the bravery of sumptuous raiment, and the dazzling procession of ministers, and the clouding of their incense, and the brightness of their tapers; I will sit me down alone in the midst of my naked dwelling-place, as a white-robed virgin; and men shall love, and serve, and worship me for my own sake." And for a season it was done—so long as those lived who remembered the days of her glory, and loved her as a remnant and memorial of what once she was.

But after these, came a generation that knew not those days—men with arms upfolded on their bosoms, and brows bent in perpetual frownings; and when they came before her, she found that they had learned rebellion from her example, and from her lips had caught up the words of scorn and infamy wherewith she had disgraced her mother. And they cast her down, and trampled her in the dust, and did make her eat her very heart for sorrow. Then, indeed, by the arm of power, she was once more set up, but only to undergo a cruel and more lingering doom; to see, year after year, her worshippers slinking away, and her temples less frequented, and her many rivals' power exalted, as well as their numbers ever more increased. And even now, are not men dicing over her spoils, and quarrelling how they had best be divided? Do they not speak irreverently of her, and weigh her utility in iron scales, and value in silver pieces

the souls whom she serves? Is she not treated with contumely by those that call themselves her children? Is not her very existence reduced by them to a question of worldly and temporal expediency?

And, when we see the cathedral service shrunk into the choir originally destined for the private daily worship of God's special ministers, or when we find the entire congregation scattered over a small portion of the repaired chancel, while the rest of the edifice is a majestic ruin, as I but lately witnessed, surely any one must be more prone to weep than to exult at the change which has taken place since these stately fabrics were erected. Who can visit that beautiful church beyond the river, so lately restored,* and dwell on the exquisite screen which overshadows the altar, with its numerous niches and delicate traceries, and not feel that the great object to which all these were accessories hath been removed; that men would not have labored so, and given their time and ability, only to prepare a standing-place for that ordinary table, on which all turn their backs who worship there; but that *there* was once an altar which men loved and revered, and which it was deemed most honorable to honor. Who can witness the worship as performed in a cathedral, and see so many points yet recalling ancient practices, so much effect curtailed of its power by the destruction of the feeling and motive which gave it rise, such a wish, but so manifestly baffled, to fill with religious majesty the mighty edifice, more by the organ's voice, than by the emblems of God's presence, or by any accord of feeling thrilling through the hearts of a multitude; and not weep to think how a nation can have been cheated out of the most beautiful and moving parts of its religion, and glory in retaining but its shreds and fragments?

Assuredly, when I see these things, and still more, when I hear men admiring the English liturgy as a matchless and sublime composition, and not reflecting how it is all taken from ours, which they abolished—only that what they have retained, and what forms the essential part of their service, is with us but a part inferior and preparatory to a more solemn rite—that their sublime collects, with the epistle and gospel, are among us but as an introduction and preface to a sublimer action; when I see this Church thus treasuring up and preserving from destruction the accessories of our worship, so highly prizing the very frame in which *our* liturgy is but enclosed, I cannot but look upon her

* St. Mary's Overbury, or St Saviour's.

as I would on one whom God's hand hath touched, in whom the light of reason is darkened, though the feelings of the heart have not been seared ; who presses to her bosom, and cherishes there, the empty locket which once contained the image of all she loved on earth, and continues to rock the cradle of her departed child !

But if, from this scene of inconstancy, mutability, and decay, we turn to look for a contrast, I cannot have much difficulty in finding one. Oh that I could bear you, on the wings of my affections, to that holy city, where all that is Christian and Catholic bears the stamp of unfading immortality ! Thither must the Catholic look to find the surest proof of how effectual, and how universal, is the one principle of faith which animates and directs his religion. There I could show you to demonstration, how tenacious the Catholic Church has always been of every doctrine ; since she has taken such pains and care to preserve the meanest edifice or monument that might recall to her mind past times, or which has recorded on it a doctrine or a discipline, the remnant of a dearer and a happier age. I could show you many churches yet standing, not, indeed, like the ancient, lofty, and magnificent piles which we see in this country, but humble and poor, though entire and untouched, scattered over tracts once, perhaps, the most populous upon earth, and adorned with the most sumptuous buildings, but now become dreary wastes and heaps of ruins ; standing alone, and appearing great by their solitude—the early temples of Christianity. And you would ask me, perhaps, wherefore are still preserved these churches of the early Christians, in places where now there are no congregations to frequent them ? For soon would you see that the religious edifices which you meet in the most populous and crowded parts of this city, are not nearer one to the other, than those of the now uninhabited tracts of Rome. And you might ask me, too, what it was that saved them from the ruin which hath made cities desolate, hath emptied the palaces of kings, and crushed into dust the monuments of empires ? For you would marvel how these, although built of the most costly and durable materials, grasping, as it were, with their foundations, the very rocks below, and banded and covered with brass and iron, should now be fallen ; while those, on the other hand, which were formed of frail and perishable materials, have withstood the shock. And I would reply to you, that religion hath embalmed them with the sweet savour of her holiness, so that neither rust nor moth could assail them ; and that, when the barbarian ravaged and

raged around, she marked their door-posts with the blood of martyrs, and the destroyer bowed his head and passed them by, and left them as a refuge for the desolate, in the wildest times of riot and bloodshed.

And you would find that from that time all care has been taken to preserve them in the most perfect integrity; that all those arrangements in these venerable Churches, which supposed a state and order of discipline varying from what we now follow, may there be yet observed; you would see the place where the catechumens stood in the porches, and where the penitents of the different orders waited, imploring the prayers of the faithful, and the pulpits wherein the gospel was read by saints, and the very episcopal chair wherein the holy Doctor St. Gregory was wont to preach, and the entire church standing now, even as it did of old, with a calm and majestic solemnity about it, which bears us back to the feelings of peace and unity in which these edifices were originally planned. And what is the principle which these places record? Not merely do they tell events of older times—not only do they keep alive in our hearts and minds those feelings of attachment which connect us with happier and better days; but they are a pledge and a security that the same spirit which has kept them entire, would preserve still more the doctrines therein originally taught, and imbodyed in their very plan and constitution.

And then note, with this enduring power, what an elasticity and vigor for recovery this same principle has ever communicated. You have seen the Church of this country, already exhibiting symptoms of sad decay, and yielding to the undermining power of its own disuniting, enfeebling principle. Now, then, look upon that country and city to which in mind I have transported you; and remember, that twenty years have scarce elapsed since the rule of the scoffer and the plunderer came to an end, of those who stripped religion of all its splendor, and bound her rulers in bonds of iron. But she had before taken too frequent experience of such scenes, to fear their consequences. In days past, for ages, periodical invasion from barbarous foes had been her lot, and she had always found them, like the Nile's inundations, renovators of her fertility, where the very slime they left behind them became a chosen soil for the seed of her doctrine. See how soon the plundered shrines have been replaced, the disfigured monuments repaired, the half-ruined Churches almost rebuilt! See how, from morning till night, her many splendid temples are open, and without price

to great and small, and her daily services are attended by crowds, as if nothing had passed in their generation to disturb their faith, or deprive them of its instruments! And whence is this difference? Why, simply herein, that their religion, while it exercises absolute control over their judgments and belief, speaks to their senses, to their feelings, to their hearts. For that, my brethren, is a city long accustomed to rule, but to rule through the affections. Believing herself, and, I confidently say it, justly believing herself, invested by God's promises with authority to teach all nations, she hath used this authority to keep all in the unity of faith, giving the same creed with the same gospel to the Americans and the Chinese, as she had given to the African and the Briton. But while she swayed her sceptre with uncompromising equality, she feared not to adorn it with jewels. She knew that the gold and the silver, and the precious spices were the Lord's, and by his hand had been given to his house; and she lavished them on his service, and she cherished all the arts of life, and she compassed herself with every splendor, and clothed herself with all beauty; and she hath made herself beloved by the lowly, and respected by the great; and, secure upon the rock of an eternal promise, she fears no earthly changes, nor infernal violence; from the one secure by accomplishing, in her outward constitution, the typical forms of the older, less spiritual, dispensation of hope: from the other safe, as the symbol and image of the blessed kingdom of eternal love.

LECTURE THE SIXTH.

ON THE PRACTICAL SUCCESS OF THE PROTESTANT RULE OF FAITH IN CONVERTING HEATHEN NATIONS.

MARK xvi. 15.

“Go ye unto the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.”

THIS, my brethren, was an important commission delivered by our Saviour to the apostles. It stands in close connection with His other command on which I have already expatiated at great length; to *teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatever He had commanded them*, with His promise to be with them all days, even unto the end of the world. On that occasion, I endeavored to show you, by the construction of the very text, that there was annexed a promise of success to the commission given: so that what was therein enjoined to the apostles and their successors, in the Church of Christ, He himself would for ever enable them to put in execution. It must therefore be an important criterion of the true religion of Christ, or, in other words, of that foundation whereon He intended His faith to be built, to see where that blessing, that promise of success from His assistance, hath rested, and where, by its actually taking effect, it can be shown to have been perpetuated, according to the words of our blessed Redeemer.

For we cannot doubt that the apostles, in virtue of that promise, went forth, and not only preached to nations, but actually converted them. It was in virtue of this same commission, that their successors in the Church continued to discharge the same duty of announcing Christ, and Him crucified, to nations who had never heard His name; and there can be no doubt, that their success was due to their being in possession of the promise with it given; and, consequently, to their having built the Gospel on that foundation to which the promise was annexed. In other words, it must be a very important criterion of the true rule of faith, delivered by our blessed Redeemer to His Church, to see whether the preaching according to any given rule has been

attended with that blessing which was promised, and which secures the enjoyment of His support; or, whether its total failure proves it not to have satisfied the conditions He required.

Such, my brethren, is the subject on which I am going to enter. I wish to lay before you, in this and my next discourse, a view of the success which has attended the preaching of the gospel, according to the two different rules of faith which I have endeavored to explain. I will begin, in the first place, and it will occupy me this evening, with examining the history of the different institutions formed in this and other Protestant countries, for the purpose of diffusing truth among the nations who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. For this purpose, it is my intention to make use, as much as possible, of authorities which no one will impugn,—I intend, perhaps with one or two exceptions, not to quote any Catholic witnesses; indeed, I will endeavor, as much as I can, to confine myself to the testimony of such as are actually engaged on these missions, or to the reports of the societies which direct and support their efforts.

The progress of conversion had gone forward from age to age, ever since the time of the apostles; and not a century, particularly among those commonly designated as dark and superstitious times, not a half century had passed in which some nation or other was not converted to the faith of Christ. By conversion, I do not simply mean their being kept in the missionary state, under the direction and tutelage of persons sent from another country, but their being so established, in the course of a very few years, as to be able to exist independently of foreign aid. They, of course, always remained in connection and communion with the mother Church, whence their faith had originally come; but yet so as to have their own native hierarchy, governing many congregations and churches regularly organized; and to be so well and solidly established, that where once this had taken place, the errors which had been removed no more sprang up and resumed their influence. This is the only idea which we can justly form of *complete* conversion; this alone was meant by conversion during the ages to which I have alluded. And so far was this spirit of conversion from failing in later times, that, on the contrary, it is remarkable how, just at the moment of the Reformation, a new field was opened, and was cultivated with success, among the natives of America, and in the peninsula of India.

Now, when the new religion took possession of this and some

continental countries, it soon struck those who embraced it, that it was incumbent on them to show themselves inheritors of the promise made by Jesus Christ: and, moreover, to diffuse the new light which they imagined themselves to have received, among those nations who did not enjoy the same happiness. Hence it was, that so early as the year 1536, the Church of Geneva instituted a mission for the conversion of heathens, who had not received Christianity in any form. Of the history of the mission, I can say nothing: but it is acknowledged, on all hands, that it proved abortive, and was very soon discontinued, in consequence of its ill success. We may, therefore, date the missionary labors of Protestantism from the beginning of the last century. In the year 1706, Frederic IV., king of Denmark, established a mission, which still enjoys considerable celebrity, and of which I shall later give you some details. It flourished chiefly, after the middle of the last century, under the direction of Ziegenbelg, Schultze, and Schwartz: and this seems to have been the first mission attended with any appearance of success.

In this country, in the year 1701, the first missionary society was formed, and incorporated by royal charter,—that is, the “Society for the Diffusion of Christian Knowledge;” and, about the same period, the “Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts” was also completely organized, and in activity. From that time, until towards the end of the last century, nothing particularly striking was done in this department. It was in 1792, that the Baptist Missionary Society, since become so celebrated by its many versions of the Scripture into the eastern languages, made at its head-quarters at Serampore, was first instituted and consolidated: and in 1795, the “London Missionary Society,” which belongs to the Independent Congregation, was also formed; followed, in the next year, by the “Scotch Missionary Society.” In 1800, the “Church Missionary Society” came into operation. Since that time, a great number of secondary associations have sprung up; many of them formed by members of different religions in this country, as the Wesleyans, and others, whom it is not necessary to enumerate. Besides these societies in our own country, there are similar ones in America, in Germany, and in France, which have directed their labors to the same important purpose. In other words, I may say, that the most wealthy and most enlightened nations of the earth, according to the flesh, have devoted themselves, with extraordinary zeal and diligence, to compass this important end, of bringing heathens to a knowledge of Christianity.

Next we may inquire, what are the means which they have in their hands? They are such as never, from the time of the apostles, have been brought to bear, I will not say upon the work of conversion, but on the attainment of any great moral object. I have not always had the convenience of consulting documents down to the very latest period, and I have consequently been obliged to content myself with such as have come within my reach. I mention this as a precaution, that if I do not always quote the notices received within this and the last year, it may not be supposed that I have been ruled by a wish to avoid what might appear adverse to my assertions. With the greatest pleasure I would have examined the history of every mission down to the present day, if my other avocations had permitted me, or if it were possible to have access to the necessary documents. It has been in my power, however, to obtain those of two or three years ago in a pretty complete form; and this is why I shall seem to choose my specimens from that period. The statements I shall be able to make will be sufficiently accurate, to direct your attention to the working of a principle,—to the discovery of how the method pursued has been found to act; for this will be accomplished whether we take the average of a smaller, or a greater number of years. For if we shall discover that the failure of these attempts has been in consequence, not of a want of time, but of a want of power in the means employed, we can arrive at a proper estimate of the correctness of their principle.

We find, from authentic documents published in the “Christian Register,” for 1830, that five of these societies, from among which some of the most opulent are deducted,* amassed funds, in this country alone, to the amount of 198,151*l.*; and if the other societies received in the same proportion, the sum must have been, perhaps, nearly double that amount.† In addition

*The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the Scotch Missionary Society, are omitted.

† The following are the specific details:

Wesleyan Missions	£55,565
Church Missionary	47,328
London Independent Mission	48,226
Baptist	17,185
Society for the Propagation of the Gospel	29,847
Total	£198,151
There are omitted, the Society for Promoting Christian	
Knowledge, which we moderately reckon at	50,000
And the Scotch Missionary Society, say	45,000
Total	£293,151

to this, however, we must not omit the co-operation of foreign societies, especially those of America, the contributions of which have also been very considerable.

There is another way of making a calculation. In the year 1824 it was boasted that 1000*l.* a-day were expended upon the work of conversion, which would give us an estimate of 365,000*l.* *per annum*, devoted to this great task.* And you will see, presently, that even this falls below the truth at the present day.

But, in addition, it would be unjust to overlook the immense assistance afforded to these societies by that which is generally considered the most important and most interesting in this country—the Bible Society. For, a great portion of its funds go indirectly to these societies, by furnishing them with copies of the Scripture—the essential instrument, in their idea, for the accomplishment of their object. The thirty-first annual report, the last published, gives the net receipts for the year ending March 1, 1835, at 125,721*l.* 14*s.*† And from the same report we learn, that the expenditure of the Society, during the thirty-one years of its existence, amounts to 2,121,640*l.* 18*s.* 11*d.*‡ It appears, moreover, that this society alone has printed *nine millions, one hundred and ninety-two thousand, nine hundred and fifty* Bibles or New Testaments: to which, if we add the issues from other societies in Europe and America, amounting to 6,140,378, we have the enormous aggregate of *fifteen millions, three hundred and thirty-three thousand, three hundred and thirty-eight* copies of Scripture.§ This statement, in any other age, would have appeared incredible; and if the true way of working conversion be the dispersion of the written word, surely an abundant harvest might, by this time, have been expected; for the seed has not been avariciously scattered abroad.

But, after we have added the income of this society to that of the missionary associations which I have rehearsed, we shall not have reached the sum total of their resources: in consequence, doubtless, of omissions in the list which I have given you. For the Missionary Register exhibits a table of the progressive increase of income enjoyed by religious Protestant societies, from

* Quarterly Review, June, 1825, p. 29.

† Thirty-first Report, London, 1835, p. 156.

‡ Ib. p. 142.

§ Pp. 145, 142. I do not know whether the copies purchased abroad for the Society and counted in their nine millions, should not be deducted from the foreign issues.

1823 to 1835, in which we see a steady advance from 367,373*l.* to 778,035*l.* *per annum*,* the income of last year.

In this great sum are not included grants from the government, whether general or local. In India, for instance, is a well-appointed church establishment of bishops, archdeacons, and chaplains, not left to depend on contingencies, but amply provided for, and able to devote their time and attention to the work of conversion. In New South Wales, the local government, on orders from this country, grants 500*l.* a-year to two missionaries appointed by the Church Missionary Society, to undertake the conversion of the natives.† Similar grants are, I believe, made in other colonies, as in Canada; and to the African missions, for the liberated slaves, some support of a similar character is, I understand, afforded. So that as far as the power goes, which almost unlimited means can give towards this object, I may say, that these societies possess it.

These funds are naturally directed to the support of persons who undertake the work of the ministry; these are, therefore, sent forth in every direction; but the estimates which I have been able to see of the number employed are so contradictory, that it is not easy positively to state it. I know that a scientific journal, a few years ago, reckoned them at five thousand.‡ There is here, perhaps, some exaggeration. Still, if we may judge by the proportion of income possessed and devoted, doubtless, to these purposes, the number must be considerable. As early as 1824, the Church Missionary Society, alone, had 419 agents, and the Wesleyan was reported to have 623.§ Thus two associations would give us 1,042 missionaries. If we take a ratio from these, and apply it to the income of the others, it would give us upwards of 3,000, exclusive of the American and other foreign missionaries, who are very numerous. Be this, however, as it

* Quoted by the Rev. E. Bickersteth, in his "Remarks on the Progress of Popery," p. 66.

† Parliamentary Papers on Aboriginal Tribes, ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 14th Aug. 1834, p. 148. The instructions given by this Society to *one* of the missionaries, sounds very unapostolical to Catholic ears. It begins thus:—"Instructions of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society to the Rev. W. Watson, and Mrs. Watson, on their proceeding to New South Wales, on a mission to the aborigines of New Holland. Dearly beloved in the Lord! The Committee address you, Mr. and Mrs. Watson, with a paternal solicitude." (p. 151.) Has the society episcopal, or other jurisdiction, that it has parental rights over ordained ministers of the Gospel? or are these missionaries sent by the society?

‡ Nouveau Journal Asiatique, 1828, vol. ii. p. 32.

§ Quarterly Review, *ut sup.*, p. 29.

may, I have no hesitation in saying, that they are three or four times the number which the Catholic Church employs.

These men are sent forth provided with every thing necessary for the work; there is no danger of their being left destitute; they have not merely sufficient to secure their subsistence, but enough to give them that station in the places where the mission lies, which insures them a certain character and weight, so far as station can procure them. The allowance given to the different missionaries varies with the places to which they are sent. To some, as to the American missionaries, there is an allowance made of 100*l.* a year; in other countries, particularly in Asia, this goes as high as 240*l.*, with 40*l.* additional if the missionary be married, and 20*l.* more for each of his children. The clergyman at the Cape of Good Hope has 300*l.*; and in the Australian mission, of which I spoke just now, there are two missionaries, with an allowance of 500*l.* a year. It is plain, that here can be no thought or anxiety for the cares of the day; but that it is in the power of the missionary to devote himself exclusively to the important work which he has taken in hand. I may just note, casually, (because I shall enter more fully upon the subject next time,) that the missionaries sent out by the See of Rome, or by the congregation devoted to that object, receive not more than from 25*l.* to 30*l.* *per annum*.

Here, then, we have all the human elements that can be required to produce great effects; and all that can be done by education, by abundant means, and by efficient support, ought certainly to be here expected.

By way of confirmation, I will give you the remarks of Dr. Buchanan regarding India, one of the most important theatres of Missionary labours at the present day. He had resided many years in that country, and to his active and energetic representations, the establishment of an episcopal see in India is mainly owing. "No Christian nation," he observes, "ever possessed such an *extensive* field for the propagation of the Christian faith, as that afforded to us by our influence over the hundred million natives of Hindoostan. No other nation ever possessed such facilities for the extension of its faith, as we now have in the government of a passive people, who yield, submissively, to our mild sway, reverence our principles, and acknowledge our dominion to be a blessing."* So that the modern missionary is not like an apostle going forth into a barbarous and unconquered

* Memoir on the Expediency of an Ecclesiastical Establishment in British India, 2d ed. p. 43.

country, plunging at once among wild and savage natives, as a lamb in the midst of wolves, without any defence save his own innocence and confidence in God, and preaching a gospel exactly opposed to all their feelings, interests, and habits; but, in most instances, he goes forth with all possible protection, and with every facility for undertaking his work.

Now let us proceed to examine the results of these immense preparations. I must take, necessarily, the subject in detail; and I will begin with India, and thence pass, successively, to other countries which appear to merit any particular observation. I regret being obliged to leave aside what I think would have been an interesting view of the subject. I had collected a number of passages from different reports of the Missionary Societies through several years, to show how, by a singular coincidence, in every case they speak of hopes, of promises, of expectations, of what is going to be done, and what may be looked for after a few years; but never of what has been done, of conversions made, of persons who have been induced to embrace the faith of Christ. This investigation would have led us over almost all the field of missionary cultivation, and would have afforded everywhere the same results. I am obliged, however, to pass it over, on account of the extensive range we have still to traverse.

In India, there are several societies or religious bodies which dedicate themselves to the propagation of the Christian Faith and the conversion of heathen natives. That which naturally first merits attention, is the church connected with the Establishment of this country; the one which has all the support that a wealthy, or, at least, a well-provided Episcopal Establishment can possibly give. Now, to ascertain what has been done by its mission, we need not go beyond the reports given us by the active and zealous bishop of Calcutta, Dr. Heber. He made a visitation of a great portion of India, to examine into the state of religion, and the prospects held out to the labours of conversion. He does, indeed, every now and then, mention converts, members of the Established Church, whom he found in different places. For instance, at Benares, which contains a population of 582,000 souls, he confirmed 14; and the number of Christians, according to his calculation, was one hundred. Now, one would be induced to suppose, at first sight, that these were converts, properly speaking, made from the natives, in consequence of sermons, or other instructions of the missionaries, in which the doctrines of Christianity were expounded to them. His own account very soon undeceives us in this respect. For, speaking of Chumar,

he says,—"The labors of the missionaries have, after all, been chiefly confined to the wives of the British soldiers, who have already lost caste by their marriage, or to such Mussulmans or Hindoos as, of their own accord, prompted by curiosity, or a better motive, have come to their schools or churches." Nor must we suppose, that by these he means actual converts: for thus he writes of them:—"The number of these *inquirers after truth*, is, I understand, even now, *not inconsiderable*, and increasing daily. But, I must say, that of actual converts except soldiers' wives, I have met with very few, and these, I think, have been all made by the Archdeacon," (Corrie.)* So that, in a very large district of populous towns, the converts have been only at the rate of 100 out of 582,000 natives; and these are almost, without exception, individuals who had already lost caste by having married Europeans, and who have been naturally drawn to embrace the religion of their husbands, by this circumstance, rather than by the exertions of the missionaries.

In another place, the Bishop says:—"These native Christians, who are members of the Church of England, in the Presidency, (Bengal,) do not exceed in number, at most, 500 adults, who are chiefly at the stations of Benares, Chumar, Buxar, Meerut, and Agra, a large proportion being the wives of European soldiers."† Now, this is a very important confession; for here we have the number of native Christians, out of the immense population of several millions, comprised in that Presidency, reduced to five hundred adults; and most of these belonging to the class I have described. Not that I mean to cast any imputation on them, for they surely are not the worse for having lost caste among their heathen countrymen, or for being united in marriage with Europeans; not but that I consider the soul of the meanest and poorest in the lowest caste equal, in the estimation of God to that of the Rajpoot, or the most distinguished Brahman of the land;—but, when we are speaking of the efficacy of a system, we are bound to estimate it by the influence which it possesses; and it is evident that the Bishop does not attribute the conversions made to the doctrines preached by the missionaries, so much as to the circumstance of these native women having married Europeans, and being cast off by their own people.

I have taken some pains to collect the scattered notices of

* "Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India," 2d ed. vol. i p. 395.

† Vol. iii. p. 338.

conversions mentioned in his tour; and have found both points fully confirmed,—the small number of the converts, and their being persons already rejected from their own religion. Thus, at Buxar, mention is made of *one* convert of Mr. Corrie, *widow of a sergeant*, and another of Mr. Palmer's, of the same character.* Again, at Agra, we have a small congregation, consisting of about twenty individuals, also formed by the Archdeacon:† but a few pages after, we find all the native Christians of that district described as *descendants of Europeans*.‡ At one place, he speaks of *two* converts;§ in another, he says, “this is the *third* or *fourth* Christian of whom I have heard, as dispersed through the hilly provinces.”||

But it is not difficult to collect sufficient acknowledgments from this writer and eye-witness, of a total failure in the Indian Church missions. In one place, he writes to Sir W. Horton, that “instances of actual conversion to Christianity are very rare.”¶ Again, in a letter to Mrs. Douglas, he says, that “certainly very few have as yet embraced Christianity;”** and, on another occasion, he admits that barely sufficient Indians and Mussulmans have become Christians, to show conversion possible.††

But it has been remarked, that Bishop Heber looked towards the south, as the great seat of Protestantism in India; and was wont to say, as his chaplain relates: “There is the strength of the Protestant cause.”‡‡ So confirmed was he in this idea before he visited the country, as to send regarding it, what must be called exceedingly exaggerated accounts, over to England. For instance, he thus writes:—“You are all aware of the considerable number (I believe about 40,000) of Protestant Christians in different part of the Presidency, the spiritual children of Schwartz and his successors.”§§ Now, hear a passage, from a letter written *eleven days later*:—“The number is gradually increasing, and there are now in the south of India about two hundred Protestant congregations, the numbers of which have been sometimes vaguely stated at 40,000. I doubt whether they reach 15,000; but even this, all things considered, is certainly a great number.”|||

And certainly it is a great number, and, I have no hesitation in saying, very much too great; as I shall at once proceed to

* Vol. li. p. 324

† Ib. p. 339.

‡ Ib. p. 342.

§ Ib. p. 16.

|| Ib. p. 257.

¶ Vol. iii. p. 253.

** Ib. p. 261.

†† Ib. p. 284.

‡‡ Report of P. C. K. Soc., 1827, p. 25.

§§ Vol. iii. p. 441.

||| Ib. p. 460.

show you. Those missions were established in 1706, consequently had been in existence a hundred years; but dating them only from the time of Schwartz, they had been at least fifty-six years in what may be considered their most flourishing state. Schwartz enjoyed very peculiar advantages; he became a favorite of the reigning prince, the Rajah of Tanjore, whose nephew and successor, the present Maha Rajah Sambogi, he instructed, although the prince never embraced Christianity; he was often his mediator with the British government, twice he saved Tanjore, and, on several occasions, levied the tribute of rebellious provinces; and, being a man of excellent character and exemplary life, the prince used to tell him, that he wished him to make Christians of all his subjects, so as to reform them, if possible, from their wicked practices.* These were very great advantages, and they are acknowledged as such by the Bishop, who says that Schwartz did more than any other person who has been in India. And what was his success? He is said to have converted seven thousand natives;† and as I think you will see that these missions have been in a state of decay, rather than of improvement, since his death, you will perceive what a further diminution must be made of the 15,000 Christians.

The Bishop, towards the close of his life, for he died during the visitation, went to that part of India, and has given us an exact report of what Christians he there found. He came, therefore, to Tanjore, the head-quarters of Schwartz, where no Bishop had ever been before, and confirmed all those who were ready for that rite. The number of these was *fifty*, and the number of communicants in the whole congregation was *fifty-seven*.‡ Thence he proceeded to Trichinopoli, another most important mission, and the number for confirmation was *eleven*!§ Instead, then of the 40,000—instead of the 15,000, to which that number was subsequently reduced—in two of the most populous places where Schwartz labored in person, and was succeeded by the heads of the mission, were found eleven, and fifty Christians to be confirmed! Now, make any estimate of the population you please,—make any proportion for the number of Christians in other places, and it will be difficult to suppose that they were any thing like 15,000. The Bishop himself acknowledges, that so far from these missions being in progress—so far from the

* Buchanan, p. 77. Memoir of the Rev. H. Martyn, 1825, p. 327.

† Heber. *ibid*.

‡ Letter by Kohloff, the missionary, *ib*. vol. iii. p. 495.

§ P. 499. The chaplain reckons them at fifteen. "Report," *ut sup*. p. 24.

number of Christians daily increasing—so far from considering it the spot whither to look for the prospects of the Protestant religion—they are in a state of dilapidation and decay. “The missions, however,” he thus writes, “are in a state which requires much help and restoration; their funds, which were considerable, have been much dilapidated since the time of Schwartz, by the pious men (but quite ignorant of the world) who have succeeded him; and though I find great piety and good will, I could wish a little more energy in their proceedings at present.”*

But we have another very important document on this head, which is the report of a formal visitation, sent to examine into the state of those missions. The report is signed by Kohloff and Sperschneider, who were at the head of the mission in the years from 1820 to 1823. The report states that there are twelve native congregations, and that each of these congregations consists of from five to twelve villages; so that we have the state of religion in 111 villages. Now, what do you think is the number of Christians in these hundred and eleven villages? Why, in 1823, they are given as 1388! So that, the number first stated at forty thousand, then at fifteen thousand, is, by the report of the missionaries themselves, reduced to thirteen hundred and eighty-eight! And these missions, observe, were founded between 1730 and 1744. But it appears from these reports, that between 1820 and 1823, there was an increase of 83, so that some improvement, at least, had taken place. But, by comparing the returns of baptisms with those of deaths, within that period, we find an excess of 74 births over the deaths, and, consequently, the number of persons who joined the congregation in four years, was 9; and, in fact, the same report, in another place, speaks of nine adult baptisms in that interval.† Here, then, is a mission, considered by the Bishop as the strongest

* Vol. iii. p. 455.

† “Report of P. C. K. Soc.,” *London*, 1825, p. 110. The number of Christians is stated—

In 1820.....	1305
1825	1388
Increase in four years	83
Children baptized in that period.....	223
Deaths	149
Excess of births.....	74

The nine converts are thus distributed:—In 1820, *three*; 1821, *one*; 1822, *one*; 1823, *four*. The number of baptisms thus given, would, according to the ordinary rules of calculation, give nearly the same result as to the numbers of the congregation—that is, about 1650.

part of the Protestant force in India, which had been founded more than a hundred years, and had flourished fifty or sixty from the time of the man who had done marvels worthy of the apostolic age; and the result of all, at the end of this period, is a congregation of little more than 1300 Christians, in a population of one hundred and eleven villages, with an excess of births over deaths of 74 in four years; while the augmentation by conversion from heathenism is at the rate of nine in four years, or an average of two in every year! I ask you if this is a flattering picture of the prospects or rather progress of the Gospel, preached as it has been there?

But I must not conclude the account of this mission without observing, that the visitors, at the same time, expressed their regret, that the mission should be in such a dreadful state of decay. They acknowledge, that the number of converts in these four years was indeed small, but that, considering the difficulties and disadvantages to which the Christians of that country are exposed, the increase is worthy of notice.* They complain, too, of serious abuses; observing that, at Vatisstergoody, the children are badly instructed, to such an extent, that all hopes of having worthy Christians must cease, till an improvement takes place; and that some Christians yet live in a state of bigamy; that at Serfajeerasahpooram they practise heathenish customs; that at Manickramam they are in the lowest state of religious ignorance; that at Tarasaram, and Kawastalam, neglect of religion is so scandalous, that it has been found necessary to excommunicate several families.† I could bring much to confirm this view of the sad decay in these missions; but I beg simply to refer you to the 20th Report of the Missionary Register, in which we read of bitter disappointments. One missionary, at Tranquebar, expresses a wish that he could communicate any instance of conversion wrought by God's grace, and a regret at "the slow progress, which till now has appeared, in the *ancient and venerable* missions on the Coromandel coast."‡ And another complains from Travancore, that the real efficacy of the missionaries in the preceding year had been but small.§

But even here I must modify the returns I have given still further: because I find it asserted, by an authority of great weight,

* Ib. p. 103.

† Ib. p. 4-8. Bishop Heber likewise complains of the dissensions between the pastors and their flocks, and of the tyrannical and fanatical conduct of the former, *ib.* iii. p. 441.

‡ P. 153.

§ P. 165.

and I have reason to think, that these conversions of Schwartz and his followers, were chiefly among the half-castes, or descendants of Europeans. Maestyn, the same missionary whom I alluded to before, a man for whose character every one must feel the greatest esteem, and who always speaks with such liberality of others, and so simply and unaffectedly of his own failures, that we must consider him an authority above suspicion, thus writes in his private journal. "Schwartz and Kohloff, and Jöneckke, kept a school for half-caste children, about a mile and a half from Tanjore, but went every night to the Tanjore Church to meet about sixty or seventy of the King's regiment, who used to assemble for devotional purposes; afterwards he officiated to their wives and children in Portuguese."* Such is the account of his labors; how different from the one sent over at first! I do not say that it was intended to deceive; but it is evident that, in some way or other, the most exaggerated picture of the success of these missions in India, and elsewhere, have been published in England.

But Bishop Heber has some very striking passages regarding their prospect of success, and what is to be expected in the present condition of India; and even those who may not acknowledge his views to be well grounded, must admit them to have been based on what he himself had seen.—When he speaks of conversion in India as next to impossible, he must have had the experience of the past to warrant him in such a conclusion. He thus speaks of a Mohammedan impostor who was travelling about the country:—"But how long a time must elapse before any Christian teacher in India can hope to be thus loved and honored! Yet, surely, there is some encouragement to patient labor, which a Christian minister may derive from the success of such men as these in India—inasmuch as where others can succeed in obtaining a favorable hearing, *the time may surely be expected, through God's blessing, when our endeavors also may receive their fruit, and our hitherto barren Church may 'keep house, and be a joyful mother of children.'*"† Again, in another passage, "With regard to the conversion of the natives, a beginning has been made, and though it is a beginning only, I think it a very promising one."

This, surely, will show us sufficiently, what his feelings were regarding the barrenness and fertility of the Church which he represented. But with regard to the missions of the Church of

* P. 354.

† Tom. iii. p. 337.

England in India, we have also several striking documents in the reports of different years. For instance, in the year 1827, in the report of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, there is an extract of a letter from Professor Craven, in which he states, that in regard to conversion, they have as yet done nothing to satisfy the unbounded zeal, which, intent on its object, does not calculate the obstacles opposed to it: this would not surprise the Society which he had the honor to serve, but all that it was possible to do, with the divine blessing, was *attempted* at present, by Mr. Christian, one of the Society's missionaries.* In the following year, we have another report: and at p. 49, the same gentleman speaks of a mission opened by Mr. Christian, among the inhabitants of the mountains, which seemed to be particularly promising, from the circumstance of the natives not being under the prejudices of caste; "a prejudice," he writes, "which has hitherto been found insuperable by all the efforts of the most jealous and most exemplary missionaries." We have here the admission of an obstacle which has been found insuperable, by the most zealous and gifted missionaries of the Church of England.

Bishop Heber remarks, "Except in Calcutta itself, and its neighborhood, there is actually no sect worth naming except the Church of England."† Of course he is speaking of the Protestants; for I shall show you at our next meeting that there are very considerable congregations of native Catholics in some districts, and I hope you will see that there are more Catholics in some towns, than there are Protestants acknowledged to be in the whole Presidency itself, by missionaries who are necessarily interested, at least in not diminishing the number of conversions. But there is another class of Protestants exceedingly active and zealous, I mean the Baptists, of whose establishment I before spoke, and who have particularly distinguished themselves in making and disseminating translations of the Holy Scriptures. Now, a few years back, the Abbé Dubois, who had been for thirty years in India, had publicly stated that not a single convert had been made by the Protestant missionaries. He was answered, and particularly by missionaries who had themselves been there; and I will first quote one, who has been very much distinguished as a zealous upholder of the missionary establishments there, Mr. Hough, speaking of the Anglican missions. Here was an opportunity naturally and necessarily of bringing forward any examples of conversion, and thus confuting this bold asser-

* P. 144.

† Tom. iii. p. 377.

tion. Listen therefore how he, in the first place, meets it. "But while I thus explain the *means* which Protestant missionaries employ for the conversion of the natives of Hindoostan, and maintain, in opposition to the Abbé Dubois's assertion to the contrary, that they are more likely to accomplish that end than any which the Jesuits have used, I nevertheless beg to state, that, without God's blessing, they do not *depend* upon *any* means of success. Truly do I concur with him in opinion, as he restates his position, that, under existing circumstances, there is no human possibility of converting the Hindoos." Here, then, is the express acknowledgment of a missionary who has been among them, that, under existing circumstances, there is no human possibility of converting the Hindoos. Had conversions taken place, could he have said this? would he not have stated them, when professedly answering to such a decided denial? Mr. Townley replied, on behalf of the Baptists, and what I am going to read from his answer is interesting, because in it he speaks of what has been effected by other missionary societies: "My object is not so much to count the number of converts upon whose sincerity we may rely, as to show from my own experience that the work of conversion is actually begun in India." Actually *begun* in India! and he is speaking of the years 1823 and 1824, and consequently of more than thirty years after the society had begun its labors! He does not then even pretend to mention actual converts, but only to show that the work has begun, which he thus demonstrates: "I have given *three* cases at least of native converts who have come under my personal observation, and of whose real conversion I can speak with some confidence. When I left Bengal, in the month of November, 1822, there was *one* Hindoo, concerning whom the missionaries in Calcutta had hopes that he was really, from upright motives, seeking admission into the Christian Church; these hopes have been subsequently strengthened, and he has been actually baptized. Herein there has been a similarity between the first fruit of missionary exertions reaped by the London Society. and that gathered by the Baptist missionaries. The first Hindoo convert effected by the instrumentality of the missionaries of the Baptist denomination, was won to the cross of Christ after the society had commenced its operations in India about seven years; the London Society in Calcutta have obtained their first convert after about the same lapse of time. It may be added, that the Church Society reaped their first fruits at Burdwan also, after having the faith and p3-

tience of their missionaries put to the test during a period of about the same duration.”*

Here, then, we have an admission that *three* societies had been for seven years laboring before they obtained a single convert; and the writer does not pretend to say, that from this beginning any great increase subsequently followed; for, on the contrary, the first passage just read by me is completely at variance with this supposition. Now a periodical particularly attached to the interests of the Established Church, takes notice of these observations, and expresses its astonishment that such acknowledgment should be made by the very individuals who make tours from time to time, to describe the fruits and success of their missionary labors, as most satisfactory, and lead their hearers to suppose that the Indians are becoming Christians by hundreds and thousands. “Mr. Hough and Mr. Townley,” the critic says, “reply that, to the best of their belief, ten or twelve real conversions have taken place. Is this the language of Mr. Townley in the sermons which he delights to preach in all the market-towns in the kingdom? Is this the language of Mr. Parsons, who has harangued so many Church missionary meetings in the course of the last summer? We can only say, that we never met with one of their hearers who viewed the business in this light.”†

And I think that any one who recollects the statements popularly put forth, will agree that it was not the impression made on his mind, that the work of conversion had succeeded so very ill as this; that, by the acknowledgment of the missionaries themselves, they had been disappointed of their hopes; that, after so many years since these societies have been established, their success is now questioned; and that, after seven years’ labor, they only obtained one convert each, at such immense expense, with such great trouble, and with such an expenditure of personal labor.

In the year 1823, a letter was addressed by a Mr. Ware, at Cambridge, to a celebrated Brahman, who some years after became better known in this country, Ram Mahoun Roy, who is often spoken of as a convert to Christianity; although there are strong reasons to suppose that he never was completely weaned from his affection for the religion of his own country. One question put to him, among others, was, “What is the true success of the great efforts which have been made for the conversion of the native Indians to Christianity?” His answer is dated the 2d of

* British Crit. Jan. 1835.

† Ibid.

February, 1824, and was published at Calcutta, by the Rev. Mr. Adams, in the same year. I am not now going to speak my own words, but to quote those of another person; and as they have been published by a missionary, or minister of the Established Church, I trust I am bringing such authority, to make good my point, as those who might be inclined not to take my assertion without proof, will not consistently reject. "It is a very delicate matter," he says, "to answer this question; because the Baptist missionaries at Serampore have determined formally to contradict whoever dares to express the slightest doubt regarding the success of their labors; and have on different occasions given the public to understand that their proselytes are not only numerous, but well conducted. But the young Baptist missionaries at Calcutta, although they are second to no other class of missionaries in abilities and learning, or in zeal for the cause of Christianity, have had the sincerity publicly to confess that the number of proselytes, after six years of grievous labor, does not exceed *four*. The Independent missionaries, also, of this city, who have even greater means at command than the Baptists, allow with sincerity that their labors, after a missionary career of seven years, have not produced above *one* proselyte."*

Such, then, appears to be the result of the labors of another of the most important societies engaged in the conversion of India; and that I may not have to return again to it, I will briefly mention the mission which it endeavored to establish in the Burmese empire, by means of Mr. Judson and his lady. They resided there a number of years, and published their own journal. The result of their mission, from their own confession, was, that, after seven years, they have not made a single convert; that, after the seventh year, they received one, and that he afterwards brought another, so that in the end they had four proselytes; when, in consequence of the war breaking out, the mission was broken up.† Here, then, we have the same mystical number of seven years, which seems to mark the period of barren and fruitless exertions of every society, again spent in the task of conversion; at the end of which the Church consisted of only one convert, and, in two or three subsequent years, was further increased to four. We have, described in the journal of these simple persons, how they attempted the work of conversion. We find that it was by presenting the natives with the Bible, and

* Nouveau Journal Asiatique, to. ii. p. 38.

† See their Journal, or its review in the Quarterly, Dec. 1825, p. 53

desiring them to read it, fancying that, in this way, they might be brought to embrace the doctrines of Christianity.

There is another society whose labors are directed to heathen India, but of whose success I have yet said nothing. I allude to the Scotch Missionary Society, founded in 1794. The pamphlet which I hold in my hand contains an eloquent and sensible address, made to the society in May of last year, by the Scotch Assembly's first missionary to India, Mr. Duff. He details, in an interesting manner, the defects of the system hitherto followed, and dwells on the difficulties to which the missionary is subjected when he attempts to preach the gospel. He is perplexed whence to draw his evidences, or to what authority he should appeal. If he speak of the internal evidence of the Scriptures, the Brahman immediately meets him with the Vedas, and attempts to show as strong grounds for their divine authority. If the Christian appeal to the Scripture miracles, the Indian has an abundant store to place in opposition. Thus, every argument fails; and if you succeed in driving them from their own convictions, the consequence too often is, according to the author's expression, that they leap over Christianity, from Paganism into Atheism. The Scotch Missionary Society has, consequently, adopted a new plan: that of educating the natives, from childhood, for missionary purposes. Whether this will prove a more successful method, time alone can show. But the departure from the system pursued by all other societies, and by this one itself at first, proves that experience has shown it to be ineffectual. Indeed the entire statement of the missionary supposes, and is directed to prove, that it has been unattended by any fruit.

Coming now to a general conclusion, with regard to the whole of India, we find again a number of confessions that, considering it altogether, without reference to one religion or society rather than another, there have been little or no good results. In a work, published at Edinburgh in 1822, entitled, "Reflections on the State of British India," the author gives us the result of his experience on the subject of Indian conversion. "The extraordinary conversions," he writes, "announced in the *Quarterly Review*, may have taken place, but in the East they are unknown. The individuals who have embraced the Christian religion are mostly considered as persons driven from their castes in consequence of their crimes, and attracted to a new religion by a less severe morality."* Here, again, we have the circumstance

* P. 42.—Not having access to the work, this passage has rather the substance than the very words of the author.

repeated, that all the converts had previously lost caste; but we have this very severe remark in addition, that they were led to embrace the religion preached to them, because it proposed a laxer code of morals than their heathenish law!

Another work, also, of about the same period, which certainly does not seem hostile to the cause of missionary societies, expresses itself in this manner. "It is a fact that may be unpalatable to those who are sanguinely looking for the conversion of Hindoostan: but it ought not to be dissembled, that up to this day, Christianity has made little or no real progress among that people. Thirty years have passed since the missionaries commenced their labors, and it may be confidently asserted, that more than 300 converts have not been made in this long space of time; among whom, it may be doubted, if any Brahmin or Rajahpoot can be named."*

There is another authority, which I will quote, before leaving these missions. "The London Asiatic Journal" for 1825 observes, that in the actual state of the Hindoos, the difficulties opposed to the progress of Christianity are altogether insuperable; and that there is not the slightest reason to believe that the sweet and mild truths of Christianity will make them renounce their errors. This Journal, which possesses considerable sources of information, again declares, that, so far as its experience goes, there is no reason to think it possible to convert the Indians—and that hitherto, obstacles which are considered insurmountable have been found in the way.†

So much for the propagation of Christianity in India. You have seen how it has been acknowledged, by persons of every class interested in the success of these missions,—by persons who have all the means of arriving at correct information regarding them,—and I have not quoted one Catholic writer,—that, hitherto, nothing has been done that can be considered demonstrative of the divine blessing on their labors who have undertaken them. The fact is, that they must be pronounced completely unsuccessful; for, after all, one, or two, or even five hundred conversions, would not be wonderful in any case; because there are always local or individual interests, by which

* Monthly Review, vol. xcix. p. 223.

† P. 158.—It is evident from later writers, that little or no improvement has taken place in the Indian mission since the date of the documents which I have quoted. Consult, for instance, Hoole's "Personal Narrative of a Tour in the South of India," from which we may draw both negative and positive proof of the total failure of any thing like conversion among the Hindoos.

some may be led to embrace any system of religion, out of such an immense population. This is not the success which Christ intended His Church to have; nor is it what she ever before understood by the conversion of heathen nations.

If we go to North America, we have circumstances of another character, but still of a very interesting nature. It is necessary carefully to distinguish the work of conversion, where undertaken alone, upon its own merits, from it when connected with the work of civilization. In India, the case is such as to admit of a very fair test—the natives there were in possession of the arts of life, sufficient to make them satisfied with their own condition, and, perhaps, look down on European civilization as of a lower character than their own. They were in possession of a literature, of sacred books, and other documents, which they considered to rest on grounds sufficiently demonstrable: and, consequently, they were not to be easily led by any thing but the presentation of truth itself; that is, of truth manifestly preferable to the opinions in which they had been brought up. But when you go among savage tribes, and offer them, not merely religion, but, through it, the arts of life; when the missionary bears, in one hand, the Bible, but with the other presents to them the plough; when he communicates advantages which put them on a level with surrounding populations, which they are obliged to acknowledge superior to themselves; there are excited feelings of such a complex character, (the result of totally different inducements,) that it is difficult to decide whether the doctrines presented on the one hand, or the results of these doctrines, as producing an improvement of their outward condition on the other, are the influencing motive. If to this we add the consideration, that the people so addressed are actually reduced to a small and insignificant number; that they see themselves completely surrounded, and, against their will, absolutely incorporated with nations of a different character, and of different habits, who through those very differences have been able to subdue them and become their masters; can we be surprised if, seeing that very civilization, which makes others so superior, proffered to them, and embodying among its principal elements a new religion, they give way, after struggling for years against this influence, and yield up their former habits, and with them their religious feelings and opinions? These reflections are of considerable importance towards making a proper estimate of the only two countries in which it can be said that the Protestant

missions have at all succeeded; and if you will follow my slight historical sketch of them, you will acknowledge their truth.

No sooner was the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel founded in this country, than it was determined to establish a mission among the natives of North America. The first attempt was made among the Yammoses of North Carolina, and completely failed. It was renewed a few years afterwards, and Archbishop Tennison, by command of Queen Anne, undertook the commencement of the work, by sending out missionaries. One, of the name of Moore, went out in 1704; but, after a very short time, finding all his efforts unsuccessful, he embarked for England, but was lost at sea. This failure is attributed to the influence of the Catholic missionaries, who, as the "Christian Remembrancer" complains, had won the confidence of the Indians.*

In 1709 the missionary Andrews was employed, who was well calculated for the task, because he could speak the language of the natives; and, to aid him in his labors, he had a translation of the New Testament, made by Mr. Freeman, Dutch clergyman at Schenectady, and fully competent to the task. This mission was founded in 1709, and in 1719 was again given up; and the reason assigned was, that the society could no longer maintain so expensive a mission. Yet it had been undertaken at the request of four chiefs, who had come to England to ratify a treaty. Some years later it was renewed, and after that time seemed attended with some success. But it may be necessary to state some circumstances connected with the history of these tribes.

The missionaries of whom I have spoken were sent to the tribe of the Mohawks, then living in the neighborhood of New York, and forming a portion of the Six Nations, known, also, by the name of Iroquois. During the American war, this confederation, with the exception of two of the tribes, took part with England; and in 1770 suffered a bloody defeat from the troops of the United States. The consequence was that the confederacy was destroyed; and the Mohawks, with a portion of another tribe, emigrated, in 1776, from the territory of New York, under the guidance of Sir John Johnson; and George III. gave them a tract of land, one hundred miles in length, on the Ouse, or Grand River. This outline is given, to show how the missions, now carried on for this settlement, are lineally in succession to those first established in the neighborhood of New York; so that they

* Vol. iii. p. 302. London, 1825.

have continued in operation more or less for one hundred years; and, as a link between the two missions, it may be sufficient to notice, that the Mohawks still preserve the church-plate sent to them by Queen Anne, when living in their former settlement. Here, then, is an old-established mission among these native Indians.

The first authority which I will quote respecting it is that of Brown, author of a history of the missions among the American Indians; and, in order not to give my own impressions of the results of his work, I will give it in the words of another Protestant writer. "This history is the record of a series of failures, the less to be expected because some circumstances seem to point out these nations as peculiarly prepared for the reception of the gospel. They generally believe in the unity and spirituality of the Divine Being: they are not idolaters; their religion is free from those obscene and bloody rites which are the usual attendants of superstition; and amid all the vices which ignorance and uncontrolled passions produce, they are characterized by a grave good sense and a correct moral feeling which might make more civilized nations feel remorse for the neglect of their own advantages. To such a people, it might have been expected that Christianity would have been a welcome guest: and, indeed, missionaries have, in almost all cases, been kindly received among them, and heard with respect and attention; so that in many places, first appearances promised a permanent establishment of Christianity—without a single exception, however, these appearances have proved fallacious."*

Such is the result of Brown's history of these missions up to the earlier part of the present century. Let us, however, enter into a few details. In 1826, a letter was published in the Report of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, from Mr. Leeming, who was then resident missionary among the Mohawks, on the Grand River, in which he says, that "he feels great pleasure in stating that they are very attentive during the time of divine service; that he has *twenty-two* communicants, and baptized fifty children a-year; that the schoolmaster, Hess, is an excellent man, and makes himself very useful, and has seldom less than *twenty-five* scholars."†. This is the result of the labor of the missionaries for so many years—*twenty-two* communicants and *twenty-five* scholars!

* Monthly Review, vol. lxxxiv. p. 143

† Report, 1826, p. 131

Again, in the same year, the Rev. Mr. Stewart, since appointed to the see of Quebec, went there on a species of visitation, and stated that he had found a new village, occupied by English inhabitants, and that on the 5th of June he had baptized twelve children, and administered the sacrament to twenty-four communicants, which are within two of the number before stated.* In another village, inhabited by the Tuscarora tribe, a portion of whom, as I before hinted, emigrated with the Mohawks, he baptized five adults and eight children. He then goes on to state, that this tribe was going with retrograde steps in the knowledge and exercise of Christian principles, although, after the Mohawks, they were formerly the most attentive of all the tribes in their public worship, the use of the liturgy, and the instruction of their children; whereas now the light of the gospel was becoming more dim, though it was not entirely extinguished; and he hopes that, with necessary assistance, it will be so revived as to shine brilliantly before the neighboring nations.† Thus, again, the oldest missions are going into decay, and falling away from Christianity, till in them the light of the gospel is almost extinguished.

In 1827, we have another report from Mr. Hough, dated Mohawk Village, 27th Sept.: who, speaking of some of the villages in which he had resided several months, says, "that in these places he paid great attention to the character of the Indians who profess Christianity; that he hoped many of them were really Christians, but he was sorry to say that he feared too many of them were unworthy of the very name; being given to drunkenness, which was their great besetting sin, and some of them being reduced, by it, to a most miserable state."‡ Such is the report of the state of these missions, the oldest attempted by societies established in England, among the American tribes. With regard to those tribes which did not emigrate, but remained in the United States, and whose religious instruction has been continued by the New York Missionary Society, I will content myself with an account of them, given in a work published in that country, by the Rev. Dr. Morse. He says, "that for a hundred years the matrimonial rite has not been used among them, and, consequently, they are living more like wild beasts than civilized men."§

Now, I am willing to acknowledge that, within these four or five years, there has been, to all appearance, a most important change in this part of the missionary district; in consequence

* Ib. p. 23.

† Ib. p. 124.

‡ Report for 1828, p. 174.

§ The American Universal Geography

1812. Vol. i. p. 367.

of the work having been undertaken among some of the tribes, by half-natives, who have had the benefit of European education, while they possessed the confidence of their fellow-countrymen. Among these is the Wesleyan missionary Jones; and it is certain that he has succeeded in bringing a considerable number to the profession of Christianity; probably the first instance in which the labors of any Protestant missionary have been successful. Still, it is right to observe how the poor savages are situated, in the midst of Europeans, their hunting grounds almost completely taken from them, and they, consequently, necessarily obliged to settle down in the only form of life suited to their new position, and followed by all around them. What has been done, therefore, is not merely presenting them with Christianity, but giving them examples of civilization, and furnishing them with the means of establishing themselves in a comfortable and respectable manner. The government has built houses for them, supplied them with the necessary implements of agriculture, and given them the means of properly cultivating their grounds. They have thus adopted Christianity as a part and portion of civilization. I mean not to say that all this is not right and beneficial; but I must contend that it is not a fair experiment of the principles proposed, when they are backed, not merely by sensible advantages, but almost by the force of unavoidable circumstances, which leave men no alternative between receiving Christianity and refusing civilization.

Yet even here I must not omit the observation of experienced persons, that what is now doing is only what has been done before, and will come to as little good. A late traveller in America, very zealously attached to the Protestant religion, went to visit those settlements, and expresses what he terms his satisfaction at what he has seen; but yet he regrets to find that experienced persons, and those who perfectly understand the Indian character, did not go with him to the extent of his satisfaction; because the same effects had been witnessed before, through the agency and influence of particular individuals, but were afterwards lost, and the Indians fell back into their former state, as soon as the hand that guided them had been withdrawn.* Consequently, all this may be considered as a sort of experiment; and we have as yet to see how far these converts will hold to the religion they have received, and continue in the profession of Christianity,

* *Travels in North America, in 1827 and 1828, by Capt. B. Hall. Edin. 1829. Vol. I. p. 260.*

after the individuals, whose influence has made them Christians, shall have been removed.*

There are a number of secondary missions, but of small interest to us, and the history of all which is the same. In the year 1765, a mission was founded among the Kalmucks of the Wolga, at Sarepta, under the auspices and protection of the Empress Catherine, of Russia, by the Moravians. Mr. Henderson, an English missionary, who visited them in 1821, states that, after having been established fifty-six years, they have not succeeded in making one convert. All that they can boast of is a few girls, who gave encouraging hopes of the work of the Holy Spirit in their souls; but among the grown natives there has not been one conversion.† I might say the same of many other of their missions; which are rather agricultural and manufacturing colonies than apostolic missions. The Moravians established many missions in the last century; in Saxony, in 1735; on the coast of Guinea, 1737; in Georgia, 1738; at Algiers, 1739; in Ceylon, 1740; in Persia, 1747; and in Egypt, 1750; of which not the slightest trace exists at the present day.

Before leaving the missions of the Moravians, I may mention the observations of several travellers, and, among others, of Klaproth, that the settlement at Sarepta, and, indeed all their other missions, end in becoming mere commercial establishments,‡ and the Chevalier Gamba, resident French Consul at Astracan, gives a singular instance of supposed degeneracy in Moravian settlements, which have apparently become only industrious villages, without any traces of religious principles.§

In 1802, Messrs. Brunton and Paterson opened a mission among the Tartars at Karass, under an escort of Cossacks, and that also is stated by Henderson to have failed,|| as well as one attempted for the conversion of the same people by Mr. Blythe. The late Emperor Alexander put an end to this and other missions, and forbade their prosecution; but, even before that, they were acknowledged not to have produced any fruit.

It would be easy to collect acknowledgments of a more general character, that prove the failure of missionary attempts, conducted by these numerous societies, over all the world. Thus,

* I regret being obliged, from fear of becoming tiresome, to omit the history of attempted conversion in the West Indies, where the series of failures is as remarkable as in the other parts of the world of which I have treated.

† Biblical Researches and Travels in Russia. Lond. 1826, p. 411.

‡ Voyage au Mont Caucase et en Georgie. Par. 1823, tom. i. p. 261.

§ Voyage dans la Russie méridionale. Par. 1826, tom. ii. p. 370.

|| Ubi sup. p. 420.

the Rev. Mr. Bickersteth, secretary of the Church Missionary Society, publicly declared, in a speech, at York, in May, 1823, that, "in the course of the first *ten years*, the society never heard of a *single individual* who passed from idolatry to Christianity."* The Missionary Register, after twenty years' labor acknowledges, that "*a present and visible success* is not the criterion that their labors have been accepted by God." The Church Missionary Society confess, after the same period of attempt, that they have no proof of success to bring forward, and that small success has yet appeared in the actual conversion of the heathen. A missionary, in the same journal, speaking of a youth, who had shown symptoms of conviction, but, without being converted, apologizes for his delight at such a trifle, compares himself to a poor wretch, wandering in darkness, who leaps with joy at the distant appearance of light; and hails this first example of approximation, as an augury that *our children's children* will, perhaps, see the result of these labors!† I will close these acknowledgments with the words of a periodical to which I have before referred. "We should lay aside this history of the propagation of Christianity among the heathen, with some mortification and despondency, if our hopes of the diffusion of our religion depended on the success of such undertakings as the present volumes record;"‡ that is to say, the attempts made to propagate Christianity among the Indians of America.

There is still another mission, which may appear, at first sight, to have been attended with considerable success; that I mean, to the Islands of the Pacific, undertaken with the same or greater advantages than I have described when speaking of the native tribes of America. It is a very singular fact, that this is almost the only instance on record of a nation having been the first to desire Christianity, and, consequently, of its having been willing to receive it under whatever form it should first come. It is a known fact, that the natives of those islands, from seeing the superiority of the traders from other nations, and principally of those from America, were led to ask for missionaries to propagate Christianity among them. This at once forbids our considering the establishment of Christianity there as the result of any principle of faith, presented to the acceptance of the individuals. They conceived that Christianity was a better system than their own, because they had seen it give men a superiority

* York Herald, May 31, 1823.

† Quoted in the Catholic Miscellany, Jan. 1823.

‡ Monthly Review, Vol. 84, p. 152

of mind and character: and, with exceeding good sense, no doubt, they determined on embracing it. But it cannot be considered as a fair specimen of the success which Protestant doctrines can have, when preached to heathen and uncivilized nations. I should be sorry to enter on a history of this mission on another account. Having conceded to it all that can be called outward success, that is to say, having granted that great numbers of the natives have embraced Christianity; and having excluded it from the object which I have in view, which is to try the comparative strength and power of the different systems preached, I should be sorry to enter into a history of it, because it seems to present one of the most lamentable effects of misguided zeal that probably could be conceived. I have with me extracts from writers, describing the state of these islands after they had been, not converted, but subjugated, by the missionaries: who, after having made themselves masters of the whole temporal dominion of the islands, after having made the king and his people their slaves, after having stript the natives of that simplicity of character for which they were before remarkable—and I am sure you would hardly believe it possible that men, under the shelter of the word of God, and professing to teach the doctrines of Christianity, could have so acted,—have reduced the country to a state of such wretchedness, that persons who have since visited it, declare, that, instead of a blessing, the new religion has been its utter ruin. They say, that the system of Christianity enforced on the natives has been such as totally to change them for the worse; that, instead of an active open-hearted race, it has rendered them crafty, indolent, and treacherous: so that, immense tracts of country, which were formerly seen covered with the most beautiful crops, are now totally barren; and the cultivation of that important plant, the bread-fruit tree, has been so neglected, that it is in danger of becoming extinct in the island;—that feuds, quarrels, and disputes have been so general, that a prince, one of the most intelligent persons in the country, and the first to embrace Christianity, on the arrival of the missionaries, had fitted out an expedition, to emigrate from his own country, because he could not bear the severity of their yoke. These are facts which have been published in this country;* but I shall perhaps have occasion to return to them, and say something

* Consult the "Voyage of H. M. S. *Bionle* to the Sandwich Islands." Lond. 1827. "The Quarterly Review," vol. xxxv. p. 490, and lxx. p. 609. Kotzebue's "Second Voyage round the world," and Augustus Toole's "Account of nine months' residence in New Zealand."

more of these islands, when I come to treat of the missions established in them by the Catholics within these few years.

Such seems to be the result of the missionary system, as hitherto tried, in every case : and I am not conscious of having concealed any thing, or of having overlooked any testimony that could go against me. I have carefully drawn my extracts from the original reports ; but I have not given you one half the store of materials which I had brought together in examining the subject. The result, however, is satisfactory beyond any thing, that hitherto the attempts made to preach the Gospel to the heathen on the Protestant principle, that the Bible alone is sufficient—that there is no other sanction or authority in religion—has almost, without exception, everywhere failed. There is yet another point to be examined. In spite of what I have said, we meet constantly, in the reports of the societies, an account of many persons being converted. Now, I have not been able to help noting certain criterions of great importance, in estimating the character of the conversions so stated.

In the first place, you must not allow yourselves to be led away by those reports, which speak of the immense number of copies of the Bible and the New Testament distributed among the natives of heathen countries,—you must not suppose that this gives any evidence of conversion,—nor that, because missionaries ask for innumerable quantities of Bibles, any thing like a proportionate number of conversions are made. For these Bibles are sent out in cargoes, and accumulated in warehouses abroad, or distributed to persons who make no use of them at all, or make them serve any purpose, as you will see by a few examples, which I will give you just now. General Hilslop, in his “History of the Campaign against the Mahrattas and Pindarris,” says, that “these missionaries think that this distribution of the Gospels in Chinese, Sanscrit, &c., is sufficient to obtain their purpose ; and as they send out these books to English agents and magistrates, in different places, so they reckon the number of their converts, and the success of their labors, in proportion to the copies distributed.” He says that he knew several residences, where no vessel ever arrived without a case or bale of Bibles for distribution. The residents send them in every direction, by hundreds at a time. The Chinese look at them, and say that they have more beautiful histories in their own literature, and have not the least idea whether they are intended for amusement or instruction, and, after having read them, throw them aside ; so that the resident could not possibly distribute any more : but the ardent

zeal of the Malacca missionary continued to supply them, by ship after ship, in such quantities that they were obliged to be placed in a warehouse! He adds that "this is the missionary who had written to the Bible Society that they might send him out a million of Bibles; and in this way it would have been easy to dispose of them."*

I have also seen a letter, and will quote it, although it is from a Catholic authority, written a few years ago, by the Vicar Apostolic of Siam, who relates precisely the same circumstance,— "That two English emissaries had arrived, and were distributing Bibles in every direction; the people used them to wrap up their merchandise in the shops; some of them, however, brought them to the Catholic clergy as of no use." He then remarks: "In this way, reports are sent over, and the number of converts are reckoned by the number of Bibles distributed. I know that not a single conversion has been made by them."†

In the French "Asiatic Journal," we are assured, on the authority of a letter from Macao, that copies of Dr. Morrison's Bible, which had been introduced into China, were afterwards sold by auction; and that the greater part of them were bought by manufacturers for different purposes, but principally by the makers of slippers, who used them to make linings with them. It is painful, and humiliating, and almost unbecoming the solemnity of this place, to mention such circumstances; but they are important towards undeceiving those who think that all these Bibles are put to a useful purpose, instead of this degrading and disrespectful use being made of the word of God.‡

But the fact is, that the Bibles so sent are easily and willingly received by the natives, under peculiar circumstances; and I will read you, in illustration, an extract from Martyn's Diary

* See the Month. Rev. No. 94, p. 269.

† The letter is dated 20th June, 1829, and was communicated to me by the Cardinal Cappellari, to whom it was addressed, now worthily raised to a higher dignity. I will give the good Bishop's own words, as they contain other curious facts. "*Duc emissarii societatis biblistarum huc venerunt a decem circiter mensibus: immensos libros Bibliorum lingua sinica scriptos sparserunt inter Sineses. Alii illis utuntur ad fumandum tabacum, alii ad involvenda dulciaria quæ vendunt, alii denique traliderunt nostris, qui ad me detulerunt tanquam inutiles. Numerant isti bibliste libros sparsos, et postea scribunt in Europam, dicentes, tot esse gentiles factos christianos quot sunt libri sparsi: at ego, qui sum testis ocularis, dico, ne unum quidem factum christianum. Voluit ab initio rex Siam expellere eos, significatum est illis nomine regis ut abirent, petierunt ut simul expellerentur missionarii apostolici. Respondit Barcalo, primus regni minister, sacerdotes gallos habere confidentiam regis ab initio etc. Videtur mihi rex timuisse ne nationem illorum offenderet, et mediante pecunia, ut puto, usque modo remanent.*"

‡ *Nouveau Journal Asiatique*, 1828. to. ii. p. 40.

He says: "Early this morning they set me ashore, to see a hot spring. A great number of Brahmans and Fakirs were there. Not being able to understand them, I gave away tracts. Many followed me to the budgerow, where I gave away more tracts, and some Testaments. Arrived at Monghir about noon. In the evening, some came to me for books, and among them those who had travelled from the spring, having heard that I was giving away *copies of the Ramayuna*. They would not believe me when I told them it was not the Ramayuna. I gave them six or eight more."* Ramayuna signifies the adventures of the god Ramah, which these poor creatures supposed the Bible to contain. How easily might missionaries, who did not know the language, have stated, that they were so anxious for the Bible as to have followed them miles to obtain a copy! Again:—"A man followed the budgerow along the walls of the fort, and, finding an opportunity, got on board with another, begging for a book, not believing but that it was the Ramayuna."† In another place, he tells us that he sent a copy of the Bible to one of the native princesses; and you may see how little good it was likely to do here, and what a small chance of conversion there was by such a process. The Ranee of Daudnagar, to whom he had sent it through the Pundit, returned her compliments, and begged to know what was to be done to obtain benefit from the book; whether she had to say a prayer, or was she to make a salaam, or bow, to it?‡ All the idea she had of the book was, that some superstitious homage should be paid to it. To these examples I could add many more, of a similar character. The Abbé Dubois has related an amusing anecdote, concerning the Telinga version of St. Matthew's Gospel, which a deputation of native Catholics laid, in grave silence, at his feet. It had been received from a Protestant missionary, and had proved the utter perplexity of several villages, the readers of which, assembled in council, had not been able to comprehend a syllable of it. They had at length taken it to an eminent astrologer in the neighborhood, who, having studied it to no purpose, and wishing to conceal his ignorance, seriously assured them that the work was a complete treatise on magic, and must be destroyed, lest some calamity might befall them. And they had now accordingly brought it in a bag to their priest, to know how they might best dispose of it."§

Again, we are assured, upon good authority, that a version of

* Ubi sup. p. 260.

† Ib.

‡ Ib. p. 240.

§ "Annales de la Propagation de la Foi," tom. i. p. 159, 1829.

the Bible was sent among the Tartars of the Caucæus, *supposed* to be in their own language; but it was so written that they did not understand a word of it; and the consequence was, that the books were torn in pieces, and made use of as wadding for their guns. The Chevalier Gamba observes that, at Astracan, a great number of Bibles were sent out to convert the natives, but as the greater part of them could not read, of course they could not make the slightest use of them: so that the present was completely thrown away.* These are a few out of many examples, to show you how very fallacious it is to judge of the extent of conversion, or of the propagation of Christianity, by the returns of the distribution of Bibles among the natives of heathen countries.

Another fallacious rule is the number of scholars and schools. Missionaries constantly write that all their congregation consists of their schools. But, with regard to this part of missionary labors, there are two important remarks to be made. The first is, that many heathens, especially among the Hindoos, have no objection to frequent these schools, and to send their children to them; but yet are not thereby led to embrace Christianity. Mr. Lushington, in a work published at Calcutta, in 1824, enters at full into this subject. He says, "that it is now proved that, to a certain extent, they are not withheld by the circumstance of this learning being communicated through our religious books; but that their thus consenting to read the New Testament must not be taken in proof of any abatement in their prejudices against Christianity. However numerous the scholars may be who frequent these schools, their attendance lasts no longer than is necessary to learn to read, write, and cast accounts, so as to be able to gain a living by joining the numerous fraternity of accountants or *sircars*. He argues that, in the present state of their minds, no better results are to be expected; but if any transient impression is made upon their minds by the books used in the schools, it must soon be effaced from want of being renewed."†

Dr. Heber confirms this assertion. For he tells us, that a Baptist mission had established at Decca twenty-six schools, frequented by upwards of a hundred boys, who all read the New Testament, without any one opposing it. "It is true," he adds, "that of these, few will be converted."‡ The same concession,

* "Journal Asiat." *ibid*.

† "The History, Design, and Present State of the Religious, Benevolent, and Charitable Institutions, founded by the British in Calcutta and its vicinity," p. 217.

‡ Narrative, vol. iii. p. 299.

that this education does not lead to conversion, is made by the American missionary, Gordon Hall.* An agent of the Church Missionary Society writes, that "the children have been found ready to say their lessons whenever he had it in his power to give them a mouthful of food."†

But there is another still more important consideration; and it is, that Christianity is most carefully excluded from the teaching of these schools. We have a proof of this in Bishop Heber's work, where he tells us, that at Benares there was a school frequented by 140 Hindoos, and that when, after visiting it, he went to see one of the most celebrated pagodas in the neighborhood, he found one of the boys, who had seemed the most clever there, wearing the Brahman string, and ready to show him through every part, with as manifest an eagerness and interest, as the most scrupulous Hindoo could have exhibited, who had never frequented a Christian school. All this struck the Bishop forcibly, and he thus comments upon it: "The remarks of the boy opened my eyes more fully to a danger which had before struck me as possible—that some of the boys brought up in our schools might grow up accomplished hypocrites, playing the part of Christians with us, and with their own people of zealous followers of Brahma; or else that they would settle down into a sort of compromise between the two creeds, allowing that Christianity was the best for us, but that idolatry was necessary and commendable in persons of their own nation. I talked with Mr. Frazer and Mr. Morris on this subject in the course of the morning; they answered, that the same danger had been foreseen by Mr. Macleod, and that in consequence of his representations, they had left off teaching the boys the creed and the ten commandments, choosing rather that the light should break on them by degrees, and when they were better able to bear it."‡ Thus, according to this system, the attendance at the schools may be very general; yet Christianity will not be learnt, because it is not taught in them.

Another false criterion is, to suppose that because large congregations assemble to hear sermons, they are become Christians. Several missionaries state that they have extensive congregations and audiences amounting to many hundreds, but do not feel that they have made a single convert. Martyn acknowledges

* Memoir of the Rev. Gordon Hall, Andover, U. S., 1825, p. 256. He calculates the number of missionaries necessary to convert India alone at 30,000. This plan or idea of "arguing in platoons" is not surely that followed by the apostles!

† Cath. miscell. *ut sup.*

‡ Tom. i. v. 379.

that he had a considerable audience, but yet the fruit of all his time, and of all his missionary labors in India, was the making of one or two converts on whose sincerity he depended. Indeed, it is impossible not to be struck with the feeling of mortification and disappointment manifest in his journal upon this subject. "The service in Hisdoostanee," he writes, "was at two o'clock. The number of the women not above one hundred. I expounded chapter iii. of St. Matthew. Notwithstanding the great apathy with which they seemed to receive every thing, there were two or three who, I was sure, understood and felt something. But not a single creature beside them, European or native, was present."*

This was at Dinapoor; but he wrote immediately after to Archdeacon Corrie, that they all abandoned him, upon his reproving one of them for unbecoming behaviour at worship.†

In another place, he states that his congregation was tolerable, but that, having preached against the errors of popery, hardly any one of them came again; and, "I suppose," he adds, "that after another Sunday I shall not have even one."‡

Nor are these remarks to be confined to India. The missionary at Kiskey, in Africa, writes, that he has a congregation of more than 300, but, that up to that moment, not one of them has ears to hear, or heart to understand. He then explains the mystery, by informing us that he has under his inspection 500 individuals, who depend entirely upon a daily allowance from government, and that, thus, having the people more at command, he humbly *hopes* that the Lord will bless his word, although he probably shall not see the fruit he so much desires.§ "My sermons," writes the one of Digah, "have been well frequented, and that very attentively; but there is *not one* of whom I can say, behold he prayeth."||

* P. 253.

† P. 278.—As no one, among modern Protestant missionaries, has exerted himself more than Martyn, or won more personal esteem, I will here give the history of his success. After a long time, *one* woman, wishing to be married, applied to him for baptism; but, not finding her disposed, he refused to admit her.—(p. 255.) That was the only approach to conversion which he witnessed at Dinapoor. Another who always attended, and was even moved to tears at his sermons, refused to confer with him.—(p. 279.) From that station he proceeded to Cawnpoor, where his biographer tells us that, in spite of his delicacy, he baptized one old Hindoo woman, who, though very ignorant, was very humble.—(p. 314.) In fine, *one* other conversion is all that his panegyrist pretends to attribute to him during his mission in Persia and India.—(p. 483.)

‡ P. 387.

§ Quoted in *Miscell. iv. sup.*

|| Missionary Register, 20th Rep. p. 55.

I must now hasten to a conclusion.

You will observe that I have hardly quoted any authorities that can be considered hostile to the missionary societies. I have scarcely referred to any Catholic writer; and in general have chosen such witnesses as cannot be considered opposed to the scheme of proselytism. I have endeavored to choose my authorities from the missionaries themselves, from their reports, or from their acknowledged advocates; and the results, if balanced against the means employed, the immense resources at command, both material and moral, the wealth, and still more, the superior attainments of those who have devoted themselves to the work, are such as justify what I said at the commencement of my discourse. Allow me, therefore, to repeat, that if we look here for the blessing promised by God to the method of propagating the faith which He appointed, and if this blessing is to be manifested by their success who undertake the work; if, moreover, the promise of His aid was given to those who should succeed the apostles, as in their ministry and in their doctrines, so likewise in the methods which He prescribed; we have every evidence that it is not on the system here exhibited that the blessing was pronounced, nor those promises bestowed.

If the distribution of the Bible in a language intelligible to the people be His appointed way of conversion, and if the principle, which leads to that distribution, be the ground of faith which He inculcated, surely it is time to see *some* good results, after fifteen millions of copies have been scattered abroad. Time and quantity are, it is true, as nothing in His estimation; but surely, looking at the simple form and obvious methods which He chose for the infancy of His Church, we can hardly explain such an enormous want of ratio between the instrument and the effects which Himself had chosen. Who can imagine that the command to teach all nations, not only involved the command to print the Bible, but to print it by millions, before it should yield fruit? Surely then, if we ever are allowed to argue from the failure, to the inadequacy of the means, we must confess, that, after millions of Bibles have been distributed to so little purpose, their distribution is not the means appointed by God for conversion; and, consequently, that His blessing is not upon the work, nor His approbation upon its principle—the all-sufficiency of the written word. It is true that, “the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, patiently bearing till

he receive the early and the latter *rain*.”* But if he shall, year after year, have scattered his seed in vain; if, after having used every means which skill and perseverance can supply, he still receive, in return, but deceitful blossoms, or a fruit which “sets his teeth on edge,” he will surely conclude that his seed is do-
fective, or that he understands not the cultivation of the land.

And this mortifying conclusion must become doubly unavoidable, if he shall see others around him, who, pursuing a rival process, reap yearly, from the same soil, a rich harvest of enduring fruit. And how this is exemplified in the present case, will be seen when next you favor me with your attendance.

You will perceive that I have carefully abstained from whatever might tend to decry or vilify the system followed; I have not said one word derogatory to the character of the missionaries employed. I have not, as has often been done, even in official documents, alluded to any of them being uneducated, or ignorant, or not qualified by their attainments or information for the task which they have to perform. I have not cast the slightest aspersion on their moral character, nor on the motives which have moved or directed them. I have not hinted that any thing like personal interest influences those who are concerned in the management of these societies. I have abstained from every thing of this nature, and have simply used the facts laid before us by themselves; for I have considered throughout, that the English establishment, or any other religious body, must naturally best understand what means are calculated to effect its own purposes.

Indeed, I will farther say, that it is impossible for any person to peruse the documents which I have quoted, and make himself familiar with their detail, and (far from conceiving any feeling of contempt for those engaged in this work) not be brought to acknowledge, what a fund of beautiful religious spirit this country possesses, were it only directed in those channels which God has appointed, that they may be effectual! We have it here shown, that there exist, to this moment, amongst us, some remains of that spirit, which led so many of our countrymen, in former ages, into foreign lands, to be, in the hand of Providence, merciful instruments for bringing many great nations to the profession of Christianity.

Let but the same principle, which they bore with them to the task, return again, as a general blessing to our country; let the

* James v. 7.

mantle of the Bonifaces and Willibrords, with their twofold spirit of Catholic faith and Catholic love, be caught up by this nation, and it shall divide the rivers, and open the seas before its missionaries, and shall make them the inheritors of their grace, and render this island once more, what formerly it was, a gushing well-spring of Christianity and salvation to the nations of the earth.

LECTURE THE SEVENTH.

ON THE PRACTICAL SUCCESS OF THE CATHOLIC RULE OF FAITH, IN CONVERTING HEATHEN NATIONS.

LUKE xi. 20.

"But if I, in the finger of God, cast out devils, undoubtedly the kingdom of God is come upon you."

IN the Gospel which the Church has selected for your edification in the service of this day, it is related how our Blessed Saviour cast out the devil from one that was blind, and deaf, and dumb. In the words of my text, He concludes, from this circumstance, that, seeing how this wonderful power could not be attributed to any human or earthly agency, but must have come from God, His hearers were bound to acknowledge, that the kingdom of God was really, in His person, brought among them. Now, as the venerable Bede observes, in his commentary on this passage, what on this occasion was done in the body is daily performed in spirit, in the Church of God, by the conversion of men unto the faith; inasmuch as, the devil being from them expelled, their eyes are first opened to see the light of God's truth, and afterwards their tongues being loosed, they are allowed to join in His praise. And as this efficacy and power was assumed by our blessed Saviour for a proof that the kingdom of God was indeed with Him, and through Him was presented to the acceptance of the Jews; so may we say, that in the parallel power of the Church is to be found a similar demonstration, that where it at present exists, there also is Christ's kingdom.

Such, my brethren, is the topic on which I wish to occupy your attention this evening; it is but a completion of the task which I commenced at our last meeting; when, having laid before you the touchstone of the rule of faith, which exists in the power of effecting conversion among such as know not Christ, I entered upon the application of this proof to that principle of religion, to that groundwork of faith, which is held to be essential by those who differ from us on this head. Exclusively making

use, with the exception of one or two immaterial confirmatory instances, of documents put forth by persons who have a natural interest in their respective establishments for propagating Christianity among the heathen, I showed you how it was acknowledged, that hitherto no success had attended their labors; but that, in every country, in the east and the west, the preaching of Christianity, with that sanction and upon that basis, which their religion required, had proved abortive. I then promised to go into the other side of the question; and, from the progress and the actual state of similar efforts made, and daily making, by Catholic missionaries, to prove that the divine blessing does appear to rest on their labors, and that they have succeeded in the very field where the others acknowledge themselves to have failed: yea, and that they have succeeded, according to the confession of their very rivals.

This, then, is the task on which I am now about to enter. It was originally my intention, as I believe I hinted in the first instance,* to begin my narrative from rather a remote period; I wished to commence the history of Catholic conversion from those centuries in which it is universally acknowledged that the peculiar doctrines of the Church of Rome, as they are called, were sufficiently established to prove the identity of that Church which then sent forth missionaries, with the present Roman Catholic Church. I should have commenced probably from the seventh or eighth century; but I soon found that it was quite impossible to condense, even into a lengthened discourse, the facts which this plan would oblige me to bring before your consideration; and besides, however my case may, in some respects, appear to suffer by laying aside what I consider a very powerful support, I think that you will naturally take more interest in those circumstances and occurrences which are nearer your own time, and which can be put more fairly in contrast with what I exposed at our last meeting. For there might be differences of circumstances in former times; there might be causes in operation which cannot now be discovered; and consequently the success which attended the early missionaries sent out by the Church, or rather by the See of Rome, to convert nations, as in the north of Europe, may be supposed to have depended on peculiar circumstances, which now no longer act.

It is for these reasons, therefore, that I shall confine myself to later times. But I cannot pass over one event, and that is, the

conversion of this country—I mean its last conversion, after the Saxon occupation, to the Christian religion. It is a very interesting and important inquiry, for any person endowed with a truly candid and reflecting mind, and at the same time possessing the patience to look minutely into the circumstances of the case, to see what were the causes that produced that almost instantaneous, yet lasting and universal effect, which the preaching of the first missionaries sent by St. Gregory into this country did produce. Now it was generally thought at the time when this conversion was made, and by the individuals themselves who wrought it, that no power could have effected it, and that no power did effect it, except the gift of miracles, which they believed to have been granted for that purpose by God. In discussing the subject of the continuance of miracles in the Church of Christ, the late Professor of Divinity in the University of Oxford says, that “when, in later periods, persons sent to preach the gospel were placed in circumstances similar to those of the apostles, there can be no difficulty in acknowledging that God may have furnished them with the same means as were granted in the first instance, and may have given them the power of working such signs and wonders as would effect the conversion of a people.”* And, in fact, there can be no material or valid objection to that power having been granted for ends precisely similar to those for which it was given to the apostles. Nor can I believe that any one acquainted with the life, the writings, and the character of the great Pontiff—justly called “The Great”—who sent those missionaries into our country, will hesitate to pronounce him a person infinitely above all suspicion of craftiness, or an attempt to deceive mankind. And I believe, too, that whoever considers the circumstances under which those who first landed with Christianity on our shores came to the task—the dangers which they encountered—the advantages which they renounced—their feeble prospect, humanly speaking, of producing any effect in a country whose language to them was strange, and whose natives must have looked on them with jealousy—will hardly for a moment imagine that any thing but the purest and best of motives could have instigated them to undertake so toilsome and so thankless a work.

And yet we find that St. Augustine writes to the holy Pontiff, that he himself believed God to have performed, through his hands, such signs and wonders as led these islanders to embrace

* Lectures on the Ecclesiastical History of the Second and Third Centuries.

the faith of Christ; and we have the answer of the holy Pontiff, in which he exhorts him not to allow himself to be puffed up and made vain by the communication of this supernatural gift; and so convinced was he of its reality, that we have another letter of his, wherein he communicates the intelligence to the bishops of the East, as a new proof of the assistance afforded by Christ to His Church, in her office of conversion. There is surely here every appearance of sincerity on both sides; there can be no reason to think that there could have been any motive for fiction or deceit: for, as the work of conversion was effectually performed, that was a merit and a matter of consolation sufficient to enable them to dispense with such false and disingenuous acts, if under any circumstances they had been possible. This reasoning is so obvious, that even writers exceedingly opposed to the Catholic doctrine of miracles have acknowledged that they must attribute the conversion of this country to their influence. And, in justification of what I have said, I will quote a few lines from Fuller:—"This admonition of Gregory is, with me, and ought to be with all unprejudiced persons, an argument beyond exception, that though no discreet man will believe all Augustine's miracles in the latitude of monkish relations, he is ignorantly and uncharitably peevish and morose who utterly denies some miracles to have been wrought by him."

If I have dwelt thus at length upon this case, my object has been to prove to you, how they, who formerly undertook the labor of conversion, were firmly convinced of God's assistance so being with them, as to show His finger working through them, and so convince the nations of the earth that the kingdom of God was come among them. And it would be difficult to find any ground on which, coming down to later times, as to the case of St. Francis Xavier, the great converter of India and other countries of the East, we should not allow the exercise of similar powers. I do not mean to enter specifically into this question, nor to do more than merely suggest the parallelism between the two cases, and the unreasonableness of denying later miracles in conversion, if the older ones are admitted. And as the conversions of that modern apostle have not been rivalled in later times, and as you will see that they have been as permanent, and have produced as stable and as lasting fruit as those of Augustine in England, or of the apostles in the provinces allotted to their preaching, there can be no reason to suppose that God might not exercise His power in the later as in the older case. But there is another curious reflection to be made connected

with this subject, and it is, that, while we thus have the acknowledgment of Protestant divines, that miracles were wrought by the apostles of our island, others maintain that they preached the doctrines of the Church of Rome. For treatises have been written by many, and, among others, by a prelate of the present day, to show that the British Church was not in communion with the Roman See till they came. And to bring these remarks to a close, I will only observe, that, Hacluyt, Tavernier, and Baldeus, three Protestant writers not very remote from that time, acknowledged, from their own observation, that it was firmly believed by all the natives of southern India, that St. Francis Xavier wrought such miracles as induced them to become members of the Church of Christ.

All this, however, is merely preliminary to our more important task. Let us now see what is the actual state of the missions established in different parts of the world, under the direction and authority of the Holy See; and as, on a former occasion, I laid before you a slight account of the instruments employed, and the resources and means brought into action, in this noble work, I will premise a few observations on the same subject with regard to our missions.

In the first place, then, there is a board or congregation at Rome, consisting of the first dignitaries of the Church, which devotes itself expressly to the superintendence of Catholic missions, and is well known by the name of the Congregation of the Propaganda. It has a large establishment for the conduct of its affairs, with a college, in which are generally about 100 individuals, from almost every nation under the sun. It has another college for Chinese at Naples; and has dependent upon it other establishments belonging to religious orders, whence the principal number of its missionaries is drawn. The number yearly sent out must be limited; and I am sure does not exceed four or six a year. However, the Propaganda receives into its service persons willing to become missionaries in foreign parts, whether seculars or members of religious congregations. But still, even with this addition, (and I can speak from personal knowledge,) the number of missionaries sent forth do not amount to ten in the year.

In France, there is an association of private individuals for the purpose of contributing to the support of foreign missions, and, at Paris, there is a college exclusively for the preparation of persons who feel called to this holy work. The society to which I have alluded is divided into two districts; the one com-

municating with a council at Lyons, the other with one established at Paris. By a simple and beautiful system, subscriptions are received from every part, with very little expense; most of them being but of a *sous* a week, collected by unpaid agents, who have each a hundred subscribers under their care. I understand, too, that the great merit of this work is due to a lady, who, crippled and confined to her chamber, has dedicated herself to the organization of this association. The sum raised in France, and its colonies, during 1834, amounted only to 401,727 francs, or about 16,189*l.*; less by 1000*l.* than the poorest of the many English missionary societies raised several years ago. This association was first established at Lyons, in 1822.* It requires no public meetings—no itinerant preaching—to nourish it and keep it alive; the Catholic principle of unity and subordination supplies sufficient instruments for the quiet and noiseless co-operation of charitable spirits.

The congregation of Propaganda is often considered wealthy to an enormous degree, and reports are often spread of its contributing large sums towards the support of the Catholic religion in all parts of the world. But it is poor, if compared to the vast sums collected by any one of the societies in England. I will venture to say, that, although three illustrious Cardinals have, within these few years, bequeathed to it all their property,† its annual income does not reach 30,000*l.* And out of this sum, it must be remembered, that the expense of educating more than a hundred individuals has to be defrayed.‡

But the best proof of our comparatively limited means, may be taken from the provision for individuals employed on these missions. In his examination before a committee of the House of Commons, 23d June, 1832, the Abbé Dubois, who had been thirty years a missionary in India, complained of the want of provision for the Catholic missionaries at the head of extensive congregations in India, and proposed that the Government should give them such succor as would make them respectable to their flocks. Now, the scale which he proposed was as follows:—To every Bishop, 60*l.* per annum; to every European Pastor, with

* "Situation comparée de l'œuvre de la propagation de la foi pendant l'année 1834." *Lyons*, p. 1.

† The Cardinals De Pietro, Della Somaglia, and the great statesman Consalvi.

‡ I say nothing of the Leopoldine Institute at Vienna. The annual contributions of which, I am happy to see, have gone on gradually increasing; because the object of its charitable assistance is not so much the conversion of pagans, as the succor of the poor dioceses of North America.

a congregation of 3000, 30*l.*, to every native priest, with a similar congregation of 3000, 20*l.*; and to catechists and schoolmasters, from 5*l.* to 7*l.*; and this, he thought, would be a large provision, considering the destitute state in which they are at present!* I remember reading an account of a visit paid by a traveller to the French Vicar Apostolic and Bishop residing in Mesopotamia, whom he describes as living in a miserable hut, not sheltered from the weather,—unable to afford himself shoes or stockings, —and wearing the shreds of a tattered cassock, as his only garment.

Such is the difference in the provision made for individuals; but we have different returns to show the comparative footing on which the two religions stand. On the 6th of August, 1833, a return of what was allowed by the Government of India to the clergy and places of worship, of different denominations, was ordered by Parliament to be printed. What follows is the proportion in the three Presidencies;—the calculation being made in rupees, equal to about 2*s.* 6*d.*:—

To the Episcopal Established Church, - 811,430

To the Scottish Church, - - - - - 53,077

And to the Catholic, - - - - - 10,163

So that the provision made for the Established Church, which I showed you at our last meeting, has but comparatively little to do, is 811,000 rupees, while the Catholics, amounting to several hundred thousand, have only 10,000 as a provision for them.

There are some other preliminary remarks to which I wish to draw your attention. The first is the peculiar misfortunes which have befallen our missions. They do not, like those supported by this country, draw their resources from a nation in a state of continued prosperity; but it must be recollected, that the missions in the East, with the exception of what is done by the native priests, (of which I could give you sufficient examples,) have been supplied exclusively by individuals sent from France, Spain, or Italy, generally members of different religious orders, and that their funds were drawn from their respective countries. Now when it is recollected that at the French Revolution the religious orders of that country were totally suppressed, it must be evident that their establishments for foreign missions were also extinguished. Thus, since the last ten years of the nine-

* See "The British Catholic Colonial Quarterly Intelligencer," No. II. p. 151 *Jowl.* 1834.

teenth century, till 1822, the funds and individuals required were prevented from being sent from that country to the work. A few years later, at the invasion of Italy, the Propaganda was suppressed, and all its funds seized by the French usurpation; the religious orders were also suppressed, and their supplies ceased to be any longer transmitted. I shall be able to show you instances, lamentable indeed, of congregations suffering under the privation of spiritual direction, in consequence of this circumstance.

Another—and without entering into the justice or injustice, the propriety or impropriety of the measure, but looking at it simply in reference to these missions—another serious blow was the suppression of the order of Jesuits. I know that the mention of this name may call up to the minds of some individuals a feeling of suspicion and aversion: they may have associated with it the idea of double-dealing, hypocrisy, and many other worse vices. But I will say that it is impossible for any one to consider and read what they have endured for the propagation of the faith—it is impossible to see in what manner hundreds have laid down their lives, within the last three hundred years, after undergoing the fiercest tortures, rather than renounce it, or even to see with what alacrity, and with what success, they have undertaken to convert infidel nations to the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and not be satisfied that truly they have been chosen instruments in the hands of Divine Providence for the greatest ends. And, although there may have been among them defects, and members unworthy of their character, (for it would not be a human institution if it was not imperfect,) it must be admitted that there has been maintained among them a degree of fervor and purest zeal for the conversion of heathens, which no other body has ever shown. So that it is not wonderful if, immediately after the horrors of the French Revolution, the celebrated Lalande should have said of them that they were an “institution such as no other human establishment had ever resembled—the object of his eternal admiration, gratitude, and regret.”* But, as I may often have to allude to the mission of these zealous religious men, I wish to remove any prejudice against them, by reading the opinion of one who writes expressly to prove that the method pursued by the Protestant missionaries is decidedly superior to that which ours follow. “The success of the Jesuit missionaries,” he says, “is chiefly to be ascribed to the example

* In the “*Bien informé*,” 3d Feb. 1800

they displayed of Christian charity in its most heroic degree.”* The author goes on to relate an interesting anecdote: how the emperor of Japan called to him Father Necker, who was at the head of the mission, and said to him, “Tell me in confidence, and I promise not to betray you to any man, do you really believe in the doctrines which you preach? I have called my Bonzas (priests) and desired them to tell me sincerely what they thought of their own doctrines; and they have candidly confessed, that what they teach the people is only a tissue of absurdity and falsehood, in which they do not themselves put the slightest credence.” The missionary pointed to a terrestrial globe in the chamber, and desired the emperor to measure the breadth of ocean which he had crossed to come to him, and then see what he had gained, or could hope to gain, by the course he was pursuing. “Your Bonzas,” he added, “are rich, happy, and respected, and have every earthly good they can desire. I have abandoned every thing to come and preach these doctrines to you; and tell me, is it possible that I would have undergone so much, if I were not satisfied of their truth, and of their necessity for you?” Such an answer, surely, was worthy of any minister of Christ’s Gospel. But let us proceed.

That circumstance, to which I have alluded, of the interruption of supplies, from our funds having been involved in the destruction of the bodies which furnished them, must necessarily have been greatly felt; and it is impossible not to be sensible that, from these effects, many missions have not yet recovered, and will not for some time to come. And their loss was not merely pecuniary, but their supply of pastors was also cut off by the calamities which befell southern Europe: so that they are now slowly recovering and regaining the state in which they were previously. Nor have the religious orders themselves yet recovered the shock, which an interruption of thirty years had occasioned in their bodies.

A few words now regarding the reports of our missions. The Propaganda publishes no report whatever—no appeal is ever made by it to the public; the congregation meets privately, and although persons who take pains may procure information, there is nothing like an official document put forth, to bring what is done by its missionaries before the world. On the contrary, I, for one, have earnestly urged, again and again, the propriety of publishing the beautiful and interesting accounts received; but

the answer has always been, "We have no desire to make any display of these things; we are satisfied that the good is done, and that is all we can desire." The fact is, that the Catholic Church does not fancy herself to be doing more than her ordinary and indispensable duty when she preaches the faith to heathen nations; neither does she believe that her success is more than a part of that enduring and inherent blessing which was coupled with the command to preach it. Hence no clamor or boast is heard within her: but she perseveres in the calm fulfilment of her eternal destiny, as unconscious of any extraordinary effort, as are the celestial bodies in wheeling round their endless orbits and scattering rays of brilliant light through the unmeasurable distances of space. She leaves it to those who find the very attempt at conversion a new thing—who, in their very statements speak of it as a fresh calling, and of an experimental effort—to blazon forth every new attempt, to hoard up, in their annual reports, every gleanings of hope, and employ the orator's skill, and the democratic arts of public appeals, to keep alive the apostolic vocation.

The French association does indeed publish reports, but of a very different form from their's. They do not consist of a yearly collection of heterogeneous materials, but appear monthly, as edifying tracts, composed almost exclusively of letters from the missionaries, generally written in a strain of simple, cheerful piety, which makes us feel, in perusing them, that they who wrote them are the successors in spirit, as in their ministry, of the ancient converters of nations. There is an absence in them of all affected phrase, and of all reliance on particular dogmas, to the exclusion of others no less important, which we too often find in the jarring narratives of other religions. These reports, too, if we ought so to call them,* do not embrace any thing like the whole of our missions, but only comprise those which are supported by the French association.

The materials, therefore, which I shall use, I have been obliged to glean from such documents as have fallen in my way, or as I have

* They appear under the title of "*Annales de l'Association pour la Propagation de la Foi*," *Paris* and *Lyons*. It is a pity that this beautiful and cheap publication is not more known in England, or rather that it is not regularly translated and republished here. It would do much to open the eyes of many to the superior spirit which animates our missionaries. But what is no less important, it would present a fund of consolation and encouragement to clergy and laity amidst their respective trials, and show them how the grace of the apostleship, and the prowess of the martyrs yet reside in the Church of God. [The wish here expressed has since been complied with.]

been able, with some pains, to procure. One great source, however, of information I particularly value. In my last address to you, when treating of the success of Protestant missions, you will recollect that I made use exclusively of Protestant authorities, and chiefly of the acknowledgments of missionary reports themselves. Now, therefore, in fairness, I may be allowed to use Catholic testimonials, in speaking of Catholic missions. But I wish to renounce this advantage as much as possible, and give you the account of them, from Protestant authorities, and even from the confessions of those who allow their own failure in the same territory. This, at any rate, will place my assertions above suspicion, and will give weight and credit to the statements of our own missionaries when I quote them. But for some countries, into which they alone have penetrated,—that is, for all countries where persecution rages, and where the striving for the faith is unto blood,—we *must* be content with their testimony; yet even for these, I hope to gather confirmatory evidence from those who, there at least, have never entered into rivalry with them.

We will begin, as I did when speaking of the Protestant missions, with India; and the first authority whom I will bring, is Bishop Heber. You remember, perhaps, that I quoted a passage from him, wherein he said, that in the south of India was the strength of the Christian cause, and that there congregations were to be found containing 40,000, or at least 15,000 souls; but that, upon examination, these were nowhere to be found. Now, Bishop Heber acknowledges, that even in these districts, the Catholics are much more numerous than the Protestants. “The Roman Catholics,” he writes, “are considerably more numerous, but belong to a lower caste of Indians; for even these Christians retain many prejudices of caste, and, in point of knowledge and morality, *are said* to be extremely inferior. The inferiority, as injuring the general character of the religion, *is alleged* to have occasioned the very unfavourable eye with which all native Christians have been regarded in the Madras government.”* Here are two or three assertions on which I shall just now make a few observations; in the first place, that the native Catholics belong to a lower caste, and are inferior in morality to the Protestant Christians in India; secondly, that, in consequence of this bad character of the Catholics in the south of India, the law, of which I shall say something by and by, was enacted, which does,

or did, not allow any convert to hold office under the government. But, at present, it is sufficient to take his testimony to this fact, that, in the south of India, where the greatest congregations of Protestants were supposed to exist, the Catholics are "considerably more numerous."

In another place he says, speaking of the north of India, "the native Christians of the Catholic persuasion amount, I am told, to several thousands."* Now, he could not find one hundred native Protestants in the same district, in which he says that the Catholics amount to many thousands. Again, speaking of the town of Tannah, he writes: "It is principally inhabited by Catholic Christians, *either converted natives or Portuguese.*"†

Here, then, we have an acknowledgment of the success of Catholic conversion; but there are authentic returns, which give us something like specific numbers. For instance, a parliamentary document, laid before the House of Commons a few years back, gave the number of Catholics, in one diocese of Malabar, as 35,000; while another diocese is said, in the same return, to contain 127,000 Catholic natives. In one of the reports of the Church of England, a missionary writes, that in the single town of Tinevelli there are 30,000 Roman Catholics; and mentions another village, the inhabitants of which have been converted to the Catholic religion.‡

Another eyewitness, and one whose word cannot be well called in question, the Missionary Martyn, thus writes:—"Colonel N., who is writing an account of the Portuguese in this settlement, told me that the population of the Portuguese territory was 260,000, of which 200,000, he did not doubt, were Christians"—and of course Catholics; and if we allow even half of them to be the descendants of Portuguese, we have at least the other half converted Indians. "Begged the governor of Bombay to interest himself, and procure us all the information he could about the native Christians; this he promised to do. At Bombay there are 20,000 Christians; at Salsette, 21,000, and at this place there are 41,000, *using the Mahratta language,*"§ consequently natives, and every one of them Catholics. So far, therefore, we have the acknowledgments of those interested in Protestant missions, and taking a part in them, of the fact of there being many *converts* in India to the Catholic faith, and of their amounting to 20, 30, and 40,000 in single towns.

* Page 338.

† Quoted in Cath. Miscell. vol. iii. p. 273.

‡ Page 89.

§ Page 330.

This is assuredly a very strong contrast to what the same writers allow, where I quoted them at our last meeting; and it will be strengthened greatly just now.

Having produced these acknowledgments and returns, in favor of Catholic success, I have now a right to make use of our own authorities, which, while they coincide with the former, give us something more positive in their statements.

The Abbé Dubois, the same missionary whom I mentioned as having resided thirty years in the country, and who is always represented as more inclined to depreciate than to exaggerate the number of Catholics and their converts,—for it is well known that he had a particular theory on this subject, which he endeavored to maintain,—says, in his examination before the committee of the House of Commons, that the native Catholic converts in all Asia may be estimated at one million two hundred thousand; and of these he supposes one-half, or 600,000, to be in the peninsula of India;* and I may mention incidentally, that this part of the Catholic Church is governed in two different ways. There are four bishoprics, and an equal number of vicars-apostolic,—that is, bishops having a titular see in some other part of the Church.

The distribution of Catholics, according to his estimate, is, along the coast from Goa to Cape Comorin, including Travancore, 330,000; in the provinces of Mysore, the Deccan, Madura, and the Carnatic, 120,000; and he places the other 160,000 in the island of Ceylon, of which I will give you some more details presently.

Now, to show, from the reports sent by Catholic missionaries, and from private letters, that the work of conversion really goes on, I will read you one or two extracts. In 1825, M. Bonnard, a missionary from France, arrived at Pondicherry, and was immediately situated at Bandanaidoopale. In the course of six or seven months, he had acquired a sufficient knowledge of the

* See the "Colonial Intelligence," *ubi sup.*, or the East India Magazine for June 1832, p. 564. This journal contrasts the readiness of the Abbé with the caution of the London Missionary Society's agents, exhibited in its secretary's note of 21st August, 1832: "None of the Society's agents now in this country from India appear to be willing to be examined, unless they be required by the select committee." The Abbé observes, that the number of Catholics has declined for some years past. The causes already assigned, and the great decline in the Portuguese power, by which many missions then in their territory were supported, will sufficiently account for this change. Thus, the two bishoprics of Cochin and Cranganore have been vacant for the last forty years, from want of revenues, which that government used to supply before the sees fell into the hands of England.

difficult Telinga language to preach in it; and in the course of a year and a half after his arrival, he had baptized sixty-three heathens.”*

“The missions in the interior,” writes another, “are interesting, not only on account of the fervor of the Christians, but also from the success which apostolic men obtain among the heathens. Every missionary has the consolation of seeing, every year, a certain number of them abandon the worship of idols, to embrace our holy religion. One of them has written, that, within these few days, eighteen numerous families have been regenerated by baptism.”† A third tell us, that at Darmaboory he had baptized two hundred adults in the course of ten months’ missionary labor.‡ M. Bonnard assures us, that most of the native Catholics “belong to the most distinguished castes.”§ And, on another occasion, he thus expresses himself: “October 12, 1828. I celebrated my Easter at Piranguipooran. The Lord has vouchsafed to add an increase of sweet and pleasing troubles to the usual labors of this season. These proceeded from the baptism of twenty-two adult Sudras. In my journey towards the south, I baptized fifteen, almost all belonging to the best castes.”||

These statements bring me to the assertions of Heber regarding the Catholic converts in India, that they are of an inferior caste, and that it is their bad conduct and character which has given rise to the law which I will now explain, so that Protestant converts who are affected by it have been hurt by them. The law is, that a person embracing the Christian religion cannot, or could not, two or three years ago, hold any office under the government of India. Now, this law did not exist during the reign of the native princes; consequently, they who were themselves Hindoos, and the enemies of the Christian religion, were yet so satisfied with the conduct of the Catholics, that they allowed them to hold any office. And the native Catholics did so; for the Ablé Dubois tells us, that they held distinguished posts about the courts of Hindoo or Mohammedan princes, and were subject to no restrictions in the exercise of their religion. Now, if it were true, as Heber asserts, that all the Catholics were of the lowest caste, they would have been incapable of holding any office of trust under the government: and there is a contradiction in telling us that the Catholics are of a lower caste, and yet that

* *Annales de l'Association*, No. xx. April, 1830, p. 147.

† Page 170.

‡ No. xiii. March, 1828, p. 83.

§ Page 154.

|| No. xx. p. 153.

a law was made to prevent their holding office. The fact is, that this is a law made since the English took possession of the country, and consequently it was only directed against the converts after that time.

This is the enactment of the Madras government in 1816:—"The Zillah judges shall recommend to the provincial courts the persons whom they may deem fit for the office of district moonsif; but no person shall be authorized to officiate as a district moonsif, without the previous sanction of the provincial court, nor unless he be of the Hindoo or Mohammedan persuasion." So that the British government requires persons to be of the Hindoo or Mohammedan religion, to entitle them to hold office in the country. But the bishop himself acknowledges this fact. For in his last letter to his wife, he asks whether it would have been believed, that, in the time of the Raja, the native Christians (who certainly were all Catholics) were eligible to any office in the state, while now there is an order of the government which excludes them from any employment?*

Again, "about twenty persons were present, one the Naick, or corporal, whom, in consequence of his embracing Christianity, government very absurdly, not to say wickedly, disgraced, by removing him from his regiment, though they still allow him his pay."† Now, the very fact of allowing him his pay shows that this principle was not adopted from fear of offending the natives, for government was more likely to excite their jealousy, by allowing him a pension, and exempting him from service, than by keeping him in his post. In another place he says: "I had an interesting visit from a fine gray-headed old man, who said he had been converted by Mr. Corrie to Christianity, when at Agra, and that his name was 'Noor Musseih' (light of the Messiah.) He came, among other things, to beg me to speak to the collector and Mr. Halhed, that he might not be thrust out of a small office which he held, and which he said he was in danger of losing on account of his Christianity."‡

From all these facts, it is evident, that the law in question

* Tom. ii. p. 280.

† Tom. iii. p. 463.

‡ It is a well-known fact, that the new Christians in India are called *Rite-Christians*, or *Company's-Christians*, from the idea that their object in conversion is to gain support or patronage. I have the following anecdote from a Protestant gentleman, many years a resident in India. A missionary being in want of a servant, he recommended one to him, and was so warm in his praises, that the clergyman decided upon engaging him. In an unlucky moment, he summed up his panegyric by adding, "He is one of your own converts." "If that be the case," replied the other, "I cannot trust him. I cannot take a native Christian into my house."

could not have been made for the Catholics; and, in fact, that it was enacted by the English in later times.

Then, as to the charge that the Catholics are worse in conduct, or less respectable than other persons in India, Dr. Heber, it is true, only uses the phrases, "it is said," "it is alleged." But this is a form of expression hardly becoming; because, to speak in such broad and sweeping condemnation of several hundred thousand persons—to say that they bear no good character, and consequently have injured the cause of religion, on merely hearsay evidence, and on the ground that "it is so alleged," and that others say so, is not reconcilable with a high feeling of Christian charity; and surely such statements, without better ground or proof, ought not to be sent forth.

Martyn, of whom I have so often spoken, gives a very different account of them, and at once declares his opinion of them. "Certainly," he writes, "there is infinitely better discipline in the Romish Church than in ours; and if ever I be the pastor of native Christians, I shall endeavor to govern with equal strictness."* He acknowledges that, until then, he had no congregation; and he proposes the Catholic pastors and people as an example to follow, should he ever possess one. Does this show that they are of a lower character, or of inferior morals? Persons do not propose as their models those who fall under their standard of the character of Christians. On another occasion, he speaks of a very interesting visit which he paid to a Catholic missionary, Father Antonio, at his little Church in Magliapore; and thus he expresses himself: "He read some passages from the Hindoostanee Gospels, which I was surprised to find so well done. I begged him to go on with the Epistles. He last translated the Missal, equally well done. He showed me the four Gospels in Persian, (very poorly done.) I rejoiced unfeignedly at seeing so much done, though he followeth not with us. The Lord bless his labors."† In this manner does Martyn speak of men whom Heber seems to consider hardly worthy of the name of Christians!

I will give another authority regarding the character of the Catholics of India; and it is that of Doctor Buchanan: "The Romish Church in India," he writes, "is coeval with the Spanish and Portuguese empires in the east: and though both empires are now in ruins, the Church remains. Sacred property has been respected in the different revolutions; for it is agreeable to

* P. 287.

† P. 321

Asiatic principle to reverence religious institutions. The revenues are in general small, as is the case in Roman Catholic countries at home; but the priests live everywhere in respectable or decent circumstances. Divine service is regularly performed, and the churches generally are well attended; ecclesiastical discipline is preserved; the canonical European ceremonies are retained, and the benefactions of the people are liberal. It has been observed, that the Roman Catholics in India yield less to the luxury of the country, and suffer less from the climate, than the English; owing, it may be supposed, to their youth being surrounded by the same religious establishments they had at home, and to their being subject to the observation and counsel of religious characters, whom they are taught to reverence. Besides the regular churches, there are numerous Romish missions established throughout Asia. But the zeal of conversion has not been much known during the last century: the missionaries are now generally stationary; respected by the natives for their learning and medical knowledge, and in general for their pure manners, they ensure to themselves a comfortable subsistence, and are enabled to show hospitality to strangers. On a general view of the Roman Catholic Church, we must certainly acknowledge, that besides its principal design, in preserving the faith of its own members, it possesses a civilizing influence in Asia: and that, notwithstanding its constitutional asperity, intolerant and repulsive compared with the general principles of the Protestant religion, it has dispelled much of the darkness of paganism.”*

Here we have a twofold acknowledgment:—in the first place, of the high character of the Catholic religion in India; its regularity, its morality, and the respect which it obtains: and, at the same time, of its having been effectual in dispelling the errors of paganism. And this much may, I think, suffice, regarding the character of the Catholics in India.

It appears, then, by comparing the acknowledgments which we have drawn from Protestant missionaries, with the official returns made to the British Parliament, and with the accounts of Catholic missionaries, whose statements no one has ever called in question, that we have at present native churches in India consisting of about 600,000 individuals, or considerably over half a million; and this taking it at the estimate of persons rather inclined to depreciate than to exaggerate their numbers

Perhaps it may be a matter of interest only to mention, that a large portion of the Catholics on the coast of Malabar consist of Syrian Christians. When the Portuguese arrived there, they found a Church of Christians, who knew nothing of any other civilized community, but were in communion with, and under the authority of, the Nestorian Patriarch at Mosul: and we have the letter which they wrote to him, giving a description of the ships which arrived, and the strangers who had landed on their coast: and expressing their satisfaction at finding that they agreed with them in every point of doctrine. In course of time, conferences were held, and the differences peculiar to their sect discussed: and the consequence was, that one-half of these Churches, who may now be about 30 or 50,000, became Catholics, and have remained so ever since: having their own bishops and priests; using the Syriac, which is now a dead language, in their liturgy: and thus forming a body united with us in communion, like the united Greek and Syriac Churches in western Asia.

There is a singular mistake, for I wish to call it such, in one of the missionary reports, where this passage occurs:—"The number of these Protestant Christians (on the Malabar coast) is 60,000, and their churches amount to fifty-five."* Now, would you have believed that these 60,000 are those Nestorian Christians who have not joined the Catholics: men who believe in transubstantiation, practise confession, hold seven sacraments, pray to saints and angels, venerate images, and who, in short, believe every Catholic doctrine, except the supremacy of the Holy See, and the existence of only one Person in Christ; and who differ from the Protestant confession of faith on all these points? And are they to be considered as Protestants, and be returned in the reports as such, to the amount of 60,000, although no attempt has yet succeeded in gaining over one of them from their original belief.

But a remark has been sometimes made in missionary reports, that it is not at all wonderful that the Catholic Church should have succeeded so well in India, for this reason, that it had an establishment settled and provided for it by the Spanish and Portuguese government; so that when their dominions passed away, the Church continued to stand upon the foundation which they had given it. Hence the permanency of a native Church in India. I could read you a passage from Bishop Heber, in

* Christian Remembrancer, vol. vii. p. 643.

which he contrasts what the Catholics did with what the English have done since they possessed the country, and observes with what liberality the former built places of worship; while, if the English lost the dominion of India to-morrow, what very poor monuments they would leave to show that a Christian nation had therein held rule.*

But, first, the object of my comparison between the missionary success of the two Churches, is to discover which system is blessed by God's promise being fulfilled in it. The acknowledgment that the Catholic Church has been maintained in India, is a confession that we have been able to make converts and to found a Church. This is the point at issue; and the confession, that we have had the prudence to preserve it, is no disparagement of our prowess in making the spiritual conquest.

Secondly, I will enter into some details, respecting a portion of the Indian Church,—that in the island of Ceylon,—to show you how far this reasoning is correct; and I think it presents a case which will put the two groundworks of faith on a fair comparison. This island was first converted to Christianity in the following way. The natives, having heard of what was doing by St. Francis Xavier on the continent, sent a messenger, or rather an embassy, to him, requesting him to come among them. He replied that he could not go in person at that moment, as he could not abandon the mission at Travancore, but sent another missionary, who baptized many natives:—after two years, St. Francis landed there in person, and finished the work of conversion. Persecution soon arose; the king of Jaffnapatam put six hundred Christians to death in one year, and, among them, his own eldest son; so that this Church may be said to have been watered by the blood of martyrs.

In 1650, the Dutch became masters of the island; and instantly took two very important steps. The first was, as Dr. Davies tells us in his travels, to allow Wimaladarme, son of Raja Singhe, to send messengers to Siam for twelve Buddhist idolatrous priests of the highest order. These came to Candy, and ordained twelve natives to the same order, and many to the lower order; and thus they restored the religion of Buddha, for the purpose of extirpating Catholicity from the island.† In the second place, they excluded Catholic Bishops and Priests from the country, and forbade the natives to meet for religious purposes; they built Protestant Churches in every parish throughout

*Tom. iii. p. 91.

† Travels in Ceylon, p. 308.

the island, and compelled every one to attend that worship; and they allowed no one to hold any post or office, unless he subscribed the Protestant profession of faith.

Here, then, we have a Church established for less than a century, which yet had obtained a strong footing in the island. After this we have another religion introduced, and every thing done to counteract and destroy what had been effected in favor of the other, by a double method: first by giving those who were so inclined permission to return to their old superstitions, and affording these protection and means of propagation; and secondly, by proscription, and by endeavoring to substitute in its stead the Protestant religion. For 150 years, till it came into the possession of the English, the island of Ceylon remained in this state. During all this time, the native Catholics had no spiritual succour but what they received from the Portuguese priests, of the order of St. Philip Neri, who landed there from time to time at the risk of their lives, and administered the sacraments privately, going from house to house. We have an interesting account, given by the missionary D. Pedro Cubero Sebastian, how, during the time of this persecution, he landed there, and, disguising his character, applied to the governor Pavellon for leave to remain some time in the town of Colombo. Leave was given him, on condition that a guard of soldiers should constantly accompany him; as he was suspected. He contrived, however, to elude their vigilance; and, having lulled the attention of his guards, in the middle of the night, assembled the whole Christian community of the place, and administered to them the comforts of religion. The transaction was discovered; he was immediately sent for by the governor, and ordered instantly to quit the island. He did so, and landed on the other side; but found that, in the mean time, a courier had arrived over land, to put the governor of that district, Hoblaut, on his guard. A still more severe guardianship was the result; but, in the middle of the night, he again assembled the Christians, and administered the sacraments.*

These attempts, however, were not always so successful; for we learn that while Father Joseph Vaz, a zealous Portuguese missionary, of the order of Oratorians, was celebrating mass on Christmas night, for a congregation of 200 persons, they were suddenly surprised by guards, who broke in the door, and car-

* Peregrinacion del mundo-del doctor D. Pedro Cubero Sebastian, predicador apostolico. En Naples, 1682, p. 277

ried the entire congregation, men, women, and children, to prison. They were very cruelly treated, and next morning brought before the Dutch judge, Van Rheeде; who dismissed the women, and imposed fines on the men. Eight of these, however, were reserved a severer doom; of whom one, a recent convert from Protestantism, was put to death with studied cruelty; the other seven were condemned, after a severe scourging, to irons and hard labor for life.*

Such were the means resorted to to put down the Church which had been established by St. Francis in that island; and this course was continued for 150 years, until the British took possession of it in 1795. Indeed, the laws which proscribed the Catholic religion were not repealed till 1806, when Sir Alexander Johnston, to whom the Catholics of that part of the world owe more than they can repay, obtained equality for all religions, and, consequently, the free exercise of ours.

And what do you think has been the consequence of this step? Hear how Dr. Buchanan speaks on the subject. "In the island of Ceylon, in which, by calculation made in 1801, there were 342,000 Protestants,—it is a well-known fact that more than 50,000 have gone over to the Catholic religion, from want of teachers in their own religion." So that, within a few years after liberty was restored, more than 50,000 have returned to the faith originally planted there, and afterwards crushed by persecution.† "The ancient Protestant Churches," he further observes, "some of which are spacious buildings, and which, in the province of Jaffnapatam alone, amount to thirty-two, are now occupied at will by the Catholic priests of the order of St. Philip Neri, who have taken quiet possession of the island. If a remedy be not speedily applied, we may calculate that, in a few years, the island of Ceylon will be in the same situation as Ireland, as to the proportion between Catholics and Protestants. I must further add, however painful the reflection may be, that the defection to idolatry, in many districts, is very rapid."‡

Such are the results of an attempt to establish the Protestant religion, by building and endowing Churches, and by doing precisely all that the Catholics did in the Peninsula of India. See

* See the life of Father Vaz, by F. Sebastian Dorego.

† The British Critic, Jan. 1828, p. 215, observes, that "the Dutch effected a *nominal* conversion in Ceylon." As to Dr. B.'s complaint of want of sufficient teachers in the Protestant religion, there are many more than kept up the Catholic faith through 150 years of persecution, and even as many as there are Catholic clergy there at present.

‡ Memoir, Dedication to the 4th ed. p. 3.

what has been the event; that whereas there were 340,300 Protestants in this neighboring island, the moment the pressure of the law was taken off, 50,000 returned to the Catholic faith, and a great many of the rest went back to their old idolatry! But you shall hear some other authorities on this subject. Bishop Heber visited also this part of his diocese, and while there, he says, "those who are still heathen are professedly worshippers of Buddha, but by far the greater part reverence nothing except the devil, to whom they offer sacrifices at night, that he may do them no harm.* Many of the nominal Christians are infected with the same superstition, and are therefore not acknowledged by our missionaries; otherwise, instead of 300 to be confirmed, I might have had several thousand candidates."† Mrs. Heber, by whom this narrative is continued, says, "the number of Christians on the coast, and in our settlements, do not fall short of half a million; very many of these undoubtedly are only nominally such, who have no objection to attend our church, and even would, if they were allowed, partake without scruple in her rites; and then, perhaps, the same evening offer a propitiatory sacrifice to the devil! Still the number of real Christians is very considerable; the congregations in the native churches are good, and the numbers who came for confirmation (none were, of course, admitted of whose fitness their ministers were not well convinced) was extremely gratifying; I think the bishop confirmed above 300." She then says, "after service, his lordship took a view of the Mission Church, and expressed his regret at the decayed state it was in, and the distress of the mission."‡

The Missionary Register observes, that "We cannot question that the Protestant congregations were as numerous as Baldeus has described them; for the ruins of a large edifice in every parish show how much was done to root up idolatry and introduce a new religion. "There are here," it adds, "many poor Protestant natives, but for the most part they have relapsed into heathenism." And another letter says that "the pagans, Mohammedans, and Catholics are bigoted in their respective systems, but that the Protestants, in general, are perfectly indifferent to the religion of Christ."§

* This is literally true; as, besides Buddhism, there exists in Ceylon a real demonology, or worship of evil beings, known by the name of *Capuism* from *Capua*, enchantment. This is described by Upham, in his history of Buddhism. See also the translation of the Yakkun Nattannawa, by Mr. Callaway, published by the Oriental Translation Committee. Lond. 1829.

† Tom. iii. p. 400.

‡ Ib. p. 194.

§ Twentieth Rep. pp. 353, 354.

Here are the results of precisely similar foundations: when laid by the Catholic Church in India, the people remained attached to that religion after the empire and dominion of the Catholics had passed away. In another case, where the same provision had been made for the Protestant Church, the moment their dominion was ended, a large portion of the people became Catholics, and a great many relapsed into their ancient idolatry.

Pursuing this matter a little farther, the returns which we have regarding the increase of Catholicity there have continued to be of the most consoling character. By official returns presented to the government, we learn that, in 1806, the number of Catholics was 66,830; by 1809, there had been an increase from 66,000 to 83,595. In 1820, the return was 130,000; and on the 16th August, 1826, the vicar-general stated the number to be 150,060; so that from 1806 to 1826, a period of twenty years, we have an increase from 66,000 to 150,000. This, assuredly, shows that religion gains ground, and makes its way without the protection of government, or any provision being made in its favor. For, although there are 250 churches in the island, there were only twenty-six priests in 1826; and it is most delightful to read the accounts of the manner in which their system is conducted. In each parish there is a catechist, who instructs the people, and reads prayers and religious discourses to them on the Sunday; and the clergy, who have all particular districts allotted to them, come at stated periods, and find all prepared to receive those consolations which the Catholic religion affords to its members.

I have had the satisfaction of seeing a later return, which gives a very full and detailed account of the state of religion in that island, drawn up by order of the present governor, Sir Wilmot Horton. In it every chapel and school is exactly laid down, with the number of attendants at each. It proves a continued and progressive increase; while, still, the same zeal and good order are observable throughout. Since I came to this country I have learnt, with sincere pleasure, that a Bishop has been appointed to that island, which has been made an apostolic vicariate; so that now provision is made for keeping up the succession of pastors there. Had I been aware that I should have been called on to treat of these subjects, I would have procured far more interesting documents than are now within my reach: at present, I can only make use of such as most easily come to hand. But to show that the conversions in this island are not merely nominal, I will read you the testimony borne to the chur

raeter of the Catholics by Sir Alex. Johnston, when Chief Justice of the island. In 1807, he thus addressed the Archbishop of Goa. "The propriety of their (the Catholics') conduct reflects great honor upon the priests of the order of St. Philip Neri, who have the charge of their instruction. In a circuit which I lately made round the island, I was much pleased to find, that there was not a single Catholic brought before me for trial." Again, on another occasion, he repeats the same observation:—"The records of the circuit which the supreme court made round the island in 1806, show that not a single individual of your religion was even accused of the smallest misdemeanor during that circuit." There is another passage, in which he speaks of the example given to the whole of the East, by the zeal with which the clergy had made arrangements for the education of their flocks, and the liberality with which they had provided for it; so as to prove how they considered that a Christian ought to be distinguished beyond others, by his intelligence and superior education. I think, indeed, that it would be difficult to find a history of any Church more consoling, or more truly proving the blessing of God to be on it, and on the labours of those who watch over its care, than the history of this island.*

So far, I have been engaged on those countries in which other religions have also missionaries; and I have been able, consequently, to take these, in some respects, if not as guides, at least as guarantees for my assertions; and this circumstance affords a fair ground of comparison between what we have effected, and what they have been able to do. We must now proceed into countries where the Protestant religion has not been able to penetrate, or where, if it has attempted any thing, its labors have been perfectly without fruit. Let us begin with China, in which the mission was begun in 1583, or rather even later, when the Jesuits were admitted into court, and were allowed to preach the Catholic religion and build churches.

Before proceeding, however, I will give you the character of these missionaries, as drawn by one most intimately acquainted with China and its history. "They all happened to belong to different religious societies of the Roman Catholic persuasion, founded in different parts of the Continent of Europe; and were men who, being inspired with zeal for the propagation of the principles of their faith among distant nations, had been sent

* The details here given of the progress of religion in this island are chiefly taken from an interesting article in the Catholic Miscellany, vol. vii. p. 273.

abroad for that purpose by their respective superiors. Several of those who arrived in China acquired considerable wealth and influence, as well by their talents and knowledge, as by uncommon strictness of morals, disinterestedness, and humility. By means like these, they not only gained proselytes to their religion, but gave a favorable impression of the countries whence they came.”*

Again, the same writer says:—“It must have appeared a singular spectacle to every class of beholders, to see men actuated by motives different from those of most human actions; quitting for ever their country and their connections to devote themselves for life to the purpose of changing the tenets of a people they had never seen, and, in pursuing that object, to run every risk, suffer every persecution, and sacrifice every comfort: insinuating themselves by address, by talent, by perseverance, by humility, into notice and protection; overcoming the prejudice of being strangers in a country where most strangers were prohibited; and gaining, at length, establishments for the propagation of their faith, without turning their influence to any personal advantage.”†

But to return: within a few years after the Church was established, a partial persecution arose, which ended in the martyrdom of several missionaries, both foreign and native. Notwithstanding this, the Church there continued extremely prosperous, until the beginning of the last century, when persecution came in its fiercest form, and has continued unremittingly until the present day. Hence, every bishop and priest engaged on that mission is working with the axe suspended over his head, and in constant danger, not merely of banishment into Tartary, but even, under many circumstances, of certain death.

This is the state of the Chinese mission at present, and I have Protestant authority for what I have stated; for a missionary observes that “the Catholic missions, which have existed for a long time in China, are in a very critical state; because every now and then decrees are issued against the European religion, and both Chinese and Europeans suffer martyrdom: and that, notwithstanding all this, the Catholic religion is said to spread in the midst of these persecutions.”‡

Is not this the history of the ancient Church? is it not what

* Authentic Account of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China, by Sir G. Staunton, Lond., 1797, vol. i. p. 3.

† Vol. ii. p. 160.

‡ Mission. Reg. ut sup. p. 43.

we have always read of former times, that persecution arose against the infant Church, and that Christians were called to lay down their lives for the faith? but that, instead of religion being thereby extinguished, it rather increased and flourished the more?

Such is the state of the Christian Church in China, which, notwithstanding, is acknowledged to be comparatively flourishing. One of the most important and interesting missions of this empire is the province of Su-Chuen, which is under the direction of a French Bishop, assisted by a large body of clergy, European and native. It is interesting from the frightful state of persecution under which it has labored within this century, and from the firmness with which religion has withstood and overcome its fierce assaults. In 1814, the persecution commenced, and was soon distinguished by the glorious martyrdom of Dr. Dufresne, Bishop of Tabraca and Vicar Apostolic of the province. He behaved in a manner worthy of the ancient confessors of the faith, and bowed his head to the executioner's axe with a meek fortitude which drew cries of sympathy from the heathen beholders. The striking of the shepherd produced not the dispersion of the flock, but they followed him cheerfully on his thorny path. Many of the clergy were strangled, and many sent to banishment in Tartary, where they still remain. The tortures inflicted on some of the catechists vie in cruelty with those of Dioclesian's persecution.* Of two, it is recorded that they were first scourged with thongs, then beaten with sticks; after that were kept kneeling three days and nights on chains, being prevented from even varying their position; then were hung up by the thumbs and again whipped; and after being laid all night in the stocks, had their legs crushed between rollers. The mother of one native priest allowed herself to be scourged to death, rather than betray where her son was concealed.† The seminary

* From the want of a sufficient number of priests, lay catechists are employed, as in Ceylon, to instruct the people, and are of two classes. The resident are married men or widowers, chosen from the best instructed, to preside at Church in the absence of a priest, and baptize infants in danger of death. The itinerants are bound to celibacy so long as they continue in the office, and accompany the clergy.

† I cannot refrain from quoting an extract of a letter, from M. Magdinier to a friend at Lyons. It is written from the Chinese College, in Pulo Pinang, an island in the straits of Malacca.

"I am quite delighted with being at this dear Seminary. All the students seem to burn with the love of God, and will doubtless hereafter become good and zealous missionaries, as well as confessors and martyrs. Although naturally timid, they have no dread of martyrdom. The relations of several of them have confessed and died for the faith. The father of one is now carrying the cage, and the son, I assure you, is a little sad at worthy of such a title."

for ecclesiastical education was laid in ashes, and the inmates had barely time to escape with their lives.

In September, 1820, the Emperor Kia-King died, and though his son was not more favorable to the Christians, circumstances led to a relaxation in the execution of the penal laws; the Church, ever unchecked in her errand of grace by the opposition of the world, had already provided for the vacant see, by the appointment of Mgr. Fontana, to be Vicar Apostolic, and Mgr. Perocheau to be his coadjutor; and in 1822 the ravages of the persecution began to be repaired. In two months of that year 254 adults received baptism, and 259 were admitted to instruction. In the following year, a change in the viceroyalty produced a return of the persecution, which only gave occasion for fresh displays of primitive fortitude.*

Mgr. Fontana, in a letter, dated 22d September, 1824, gives the following returns:—From the preceding September there had been 335 adults baptized, and 1547 were under preparation. The total number of Catholics was 46,487.† In another, dated 18th Sept., 1826, he gives the number of baptized adults as 339, and of those under instruction, as 285. He farther informs us, that in his district or diocese he had twenty-seven schools for boys, and sixty-two for girls.‡ And it has been calculated, that,

“One day, that I was walking with my dear seminarists I began to question them concerning the persecutions, when I learnt that a youth, whose angelic appearance had often attracted my particular notice, had lately had ten near relations suffering for the faith. Two of these have since died in prison; six have been banished to Tartary, and his father and another are actually wearing the canga. These particulars he related in the presence of his companions with inconceivable simplicity, and he has since told me in private, that he was quite overjoyed when the above intelligence was sent to him.”

This island belongs to the English, and consequently has been visited by missionaries from different societies. A free orphan school has been established by some Anglican society, and another, with a church, has been opened by the Baptists. They have distributed Bibles in abundance, but we learn that not a single convert have they made, while the native Catholics amounted some years ago to 500; the faith having been preached there by some Chinese who fled from the persecution in their own country. M. Bouche assures us that the Protestant clergyman was obliged to send for him to baptize a dying slave of his, who refused to receive that sacrament from her master, because he was not a Catholic, but an *Orang-pole*, or Englishman.—*Annales*, No. xv p. 241. He also informs us, how, when a Methodist missionary had collected, with some pains and cost, an audience of seven persons, a catechist went among them, and, after a little reasoning, brought them to the Catholic College, where they were admitted as catechumens—No. xx. April, 1830, p. 213.

* This narrative has been, in a great measure, taken from a condensed view of the reports in the *Annales*, published in the Catholic Magazine for 1833.

† *Annales*, No. xi. Aug. 1827, p. 257. In 1767, the number of Catholics was under 7000.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 269.

between 1800 and 1817, the number of adults admitted to baptism was 22,000 *

Besides this mission of Su-Chuen, there are French missions in two other provinces, Yunnan and Konei-Teheou; the Italian Franciscans have the provinces of Chensi, Kansin, and Kaukonan; the Spanish Dominicans, those of Fokien and Kiansi; and the Portuguese, Canton and Kouansi. According to returns, published by the Dominican order, at Rome, in 1824, it appears that in their province alone there were 40,000 native Catholics.

Besides China, there is another empire in the farthest east, in which the preachers and professors of Christianity are called upon to give testimony to their faith through bonds, and even unto death, and which, consequently, is exclusively in the hands of Catholics. I allude to the united empire of Tonkin and Cochinchina. And first, I must premise that the mission of Tonkin is divided into two portions, the eastern, which is under the direction of the Spanish Dominicans, with an Apostolic Vicar or Bishop of that order, and the western, which is governed by a French Bishop, aided by a few priests of his own nation and upwards of eighty native clergy.

Now, in the first, or Spanish district of the mission, there were, in 1827, not fewer than 780 churches, eighty-seven monasteries or nunneries, and 170,000 native Catholics.† In the French district, we have up to that period, returns no less satisfactory, as will appear from the following comparative table for the years

	1824.‡	1826.§	1827.¶
Public Baptism of children of Christians.....	2434	3236	2050
Private ditto.....	No return	5375	6439
Total Baptism.....		8611	8489
Faithful confessed.....	165,064	177,456	165,943
Communicants	75,467	78,692	81,070

The entire number of Christians was estimated at 200,000, for the persecution, of which I will say something presently, prevented many parts from being visited. This district possesses also an ecclesiastical seminary, in which are, or rather were, 200 students, two colleges, and several monastic establishments, in which 700 religious lived.¶

* Annales, No. xiii. p. 5.

† "Piano che rappresenta il numero delle anime che la provincia del SSm. Rosario del' ordine de' Predicatori tiene a carico suo."

‡ Annales, No. x. April, 1817, p. 195.

§ No. xvi. July, 1830, p. 319.

¶ No. xvii. May, 1829, p. 443.

¶ No. x. p. 194.

The province of Cochin-China presents a no less flourishing appearance: though I cannot give you such a minute account of its condition. Suffice it to say, that in 1826, in spite of the cruel persecution, 106 converts were received, and baptism was administered to 2,955 infants, which, according to the ordinary method of calculation, would give about 88,650 native Christians.

I will now proceed to give you a few slight details of the persecution in that country. The emperor Minh-Menh has always been hostile to the Christians, but for many years had abstained from shedding their blood, in consequence, it is said, of a promise which he had made to his dying father, Gia-long, whose throne and life had been saved by Mgr. Pigneau, the vicar apostolic. Still he has for many years persecuted the Catholics, by every means short of taking away their lives. As early as 1825, the clergy were dispersed, for there was an order that all the foreign missionaries should be sent to the capital, under excuse that the emperor wanted their services, and that all native priests and catechists should be pressed into the army. An interesting account of this first stage of the persecution, in a letter from the bishop, appeared at Madrid in 1826.* A still fuller account was sent by the same venerable prelate to the congregation of the Propaganda at Rome, which I had the happiness of seeing. From this it appeared that he had been living for upwards of a year,

* "Cartas; la una del Ilmo y Rmo S-ñor D. Fr. Ign. Delgado, vic. ap. en al Tun-kin, y la otra del coadjutor de dicho Señor Obispo, ambas relativas a la persecucion que contra la religion Cristiana acaba de estallar en los Reinos de Cochinchina y Tunkin." Nothing can be more beautiful than the truly heroic spirit displayed in these letters. [In the year 1838, this venerable bishop, 76 years of age, after 40 years of an arduous episcopacy, as well as bishop Dominick Menares, for 33 years his coadjutor, and then in his 73d year, was arrested and imprisoned. The coadjutor was beheaded; but the venerable vicar apostolic died in his cage, of hardship and cruel infliction, the night before the day fixed for his execution. His dead body was beheaded, and the head cast into the river. Both heads were recovered by the same Christian fisherman, entire, after long immersion in the river in a tropical climate; the bishop's after four months. On the 19th of June, 1840, the Pope derogated from the length of time regularly appointed to elapse before a process of beatification and canonization can be introduced, and gave permission for the introduction of the cause of these two bishops, and the other martyrs mentioned in this Lecture, and of many more omitted in it, and bestowed upon them the preliminary title of venerable servants of God. By the death of Bishop Delgado, the title which he occupied in *partibus infidelium* as bishop of Melipotamus became vacant; and the writer having, a few days before the cited decree, been named coadjutor bishop in England petitioned for, and obtained, the reversion of the title, not that he deemed himself worthy to succeed to so glorious a martyr, but that he hoped to have thus, in the last martyr bishop who had glorified the Church, a patron and a model, one in whose intercession and example he might humbly hope to possess a personal interest.]

if I remember right, in a cavern, with no light but what was admitted through a natural opening, and with no food except what could be supplied by the few who knew his place of concealment. Here he continued to govern his diocese, chiefly through the agency of his native clergy, who, full of holy zeal, were ready to encounter any danger in the cause of religion. On Holy Thursday, at midnight, he had crept out of his lurking-place to his residence, which he found plundered and dismantled; and having there met by appointment a sufficient number of his native clergy, blessed the holy oils which are used in the administration of several sacraments. Throughout these letters, it is at once consoling and edifying to see the spirit of resignation and cheerfulness with which every hardship is endured, and every suffering deemed honorable, because undergone for the name of Christ.

But things have not remained in this situation. Minh-Menh at length broke through all reserve, and, on the 6th of January, 1833, issued a decree of extermination against our holy religion. It begins thus: "I Minh-Menh, the king, speak as follows. It is many years since men come from the east, to preach the religion of Jesus, and deceive the vulgar by preaching to them that there is a place of supreme happiness and a dungeon of frightful misery; they have no respect for the god Phat, and worship not their ancestors, which are truly great crimes against religion.* We therefore enact, that all who follow this religion, from the mandarin to the lowest of the people, sincerely abandon it. We enjoin that all mandarins diligently make inquiry whether the Christians in their respective districts prepare to obey our orders, and that they oblige them to trample on the cross in their presence, upon doing which they shall dismiss them. The houses of worship and the priests' dwellings the mandarins shall take care utterly to destroy; for, from henceforth, whoever is convicted or accused of these abominable practices, shall be punished with extreme rigor, so that this religion may be destroyed to its very last roots. And these our commands we wish to be strictly observed."

Upon the publication of this edict, the Christians prepared themselves for the combat, and quietly took down their wooden churches and other sacred buildings, which disappeared as if by

* Here follow several abominable accusations against the Christian religion, similar to those formerly invented by the pagans against the early Christians. One is that the priests pluck out the eye-balls of the dying, alluding to the anointing of the eyes in administering extreme unction.

magic. The priests were obliged to conceal themselves in the meanest huts, to afford the consolations of religion to their timid and scattered flocks; and yet their letters breathe a sweet spirit of joy and self-devotion worthy of the early ages. The country is traversed by bands of soldiers, searching for new victims, the false brother and the apostate betray their friends, and the poor Christians have been wandering among rocks and forests, or have emigrated from their country, not knowing whither they were flying. Four hundred churches have been destroyed, innumerable believers of every age and every sex have confessed the name of Christ in prison and tortures, and not a few have sealed their faith with their blood.

In Tonkin, the most distinguished of these martyrs, in 1833, was a native priest, Peter Tuy, venerable for his age and virtues. When brought before the judges, a lie would have saved him, but he persisted in acknowledging himself a priest. On being condemned, he only declared that he never could have believed himself worthy of such a grace; and, after supping cheerfully, and spending the night in prayer, he walked with an alacrity which astonished the beholders to the place of execution, where he prayed for a few moments prostrate on the ground, and then presented his neck to the sword. His execution was the signal for new vigor, and many who had been set at liberty were arrested again, and shut up in prison, with the canga, or frightful Chinese collar, on their necks. Among them were women, and even children. I must pass over the afflicting yet consoling details of particular cases, as well as the beautiful letters written by the sufferers themselves, and mention one or two particulars of the persecution in Cochin-China.

This province, being the residence of the cruel emperor, has been the scene of more atrocious barbarities. Two martyrs have here more particularly distinguished themselves; the one, a European, the other a native. The former was the Abbé Gagelin, a priest of the diocese of Besançon. He was in prison, when, on the 12th of October, 1833, his friend and brother martyr, M. Jaccard, informed him of his impending death by the following note:—"I think it my duty to inform you, my happy brother, that you have been condemned to death, for having preached in different provinces. I am sure, that, if God grant you the grace of martyrdom, which you have come so far to seek, you will not forget those whom you leave behind." The blessed confessor could not believe the tidings, as being too good for his deserts; and replied, that he believed he was only condemned to exile.

Upon M. Jaccard's assuring him that his death was irrevocably decided on, he thus replied: "The news which you communicate penetrates with gladness the very centre of my heart. Never did I before experience such joy. 'I have rejoiced in the things which have been said to me, we will go into the house of the Lord.' The grace of martyrdom, of which I am every way unworthy, has been the object of my most ardent desires since my infancy; I have especially prayed for it every time that I have elevated the precious blood of Christ in the holy sacrifice of the mass. I quit a world in which I have nothing to regret; the sight of my dear Jesus crucified consoles me, and robs death of all its bitterness. All my ambition is to go out speedily from this body of sin, to be united to Christ Jesus in a happy eternity."

On the 17th of the same month, this holy priest was conducted from his prison to the place of execution, surrounded with a terrible array of troops, with their swords drawn, while before him went a herald bearing a board, on which it was recorded that he was condemned to be strangled, for having preached the religion of Jesus. This sentence was soon executed upon him, and his body was ransomed by the Christians from the guard. The king's vengeance, however, pursued him to the grave, and he ordered his place of burial to be discovered, and the body kept for some time uninterred.

The representative of the natives, and of the lay order, in this glorious conflict, was Paul Doi-Buong, captain of the royal guards. He had been already a year in prison, with six soldiers of his troop, who bore with equal fortitude with himself the horrors of imprisonment as suffered in that country, as well as many supernumerary tortures inflicted on them. Soon after the martyrdom of M. Gagelin, the king ordered him to be beheaded on the site of a ruined church, and left unburied for three days. He walked cheerfully to execution, though it was a difficult and long journey, and only asked permission to suffer on the ruins of the altar; where, having prostrated himself for a few moments in prayer, he meekly raised his head and received the glorious stroke.*

Allow me, my Catholic brethren, to ask you, if you feel not a just pride in these new testimonies to the evidences of your faith? Is it not a consolation to you to feel how, even in this eleventh hour, its radiancy and power are as strong as ever, and can

* I am indebted for this account of the persecution to the "Annales," or rather to an extract of them, published at Lyons in a separate form, as I cannot find access to the original work in this country.

instil into the souls of the timid and weak the heroism of an apostolic age? For, while I was recounting this touching history of a distant land, were you not inclined to imagine that time, rather than space, separated you from these glorious sufferers, and that I was but repeating the well-known history of Dioclesian's cruelties? But let me also ask, if, in this, there be no sting of self-reproach? if our lukewarmness, while our fellow-members were thus suffering every extremity, nay, if our very ignorance of what was befalling them, is not a subject of just reproof? For, if the sympathy of a common body require that the most separated members should mutually feel each other's griefs, if, in former ages, when communication between country and country was more difficult, the rumor of a distant persecution, wherein the Church was glorified by new proofs of constancy, thrilled throughout its body with a holy emotion, and touching the harmonious cords which bind it together, raised a universal note of encouraging sympathy, which seemed to re-echo from the Church to heaven; is it not cruel to think how little we have partaken in spirit, in these great things, how little we have known of the contemporary yet painful triumphs of our religion?

How seldom do we speak of the natives of those distant countries, except as of barbarous tribes, with whom we have no common feeling! and yet are there among them not only many dear brethren in Christ Jesus, but venerable martyrs, the latchet of whose shoes we are not worthy to untie, the true inheritors of God's brightest promises, the surest pride and glory of our religion! How often have we chid the cold and faint-hearted spirit of our age's faith, while it was burning clear and potent in the breast of the Eastern missionary, and of the Chinese maiden; while angels, turning, perhaps, aside from our indifference, were looking down, as on a spectacle worthy of their gaze, upon the deserts of Tartary, or the noisome dungeons of Tonkin!*

But I trust that this reproach will not last longer, and that our sympathies and prayers, and, if needful, our more substantial aid, will be cheerfully impended upon our afflicted brethren.

And, to return from this painful digression, we may fairly challenge other religions to produce a parallel to what I have laid before you. Let them show us, among their missionaries,

* Still more splendid martyrdoms have occurred, since these lectures were delivered, for the account of which the reader is referred to the *Annals* now published in English, a work which will fully repay a regular perusal.

men who, instead of going with their wives in litters round countries where their persons are secure, and distributing Bibles,* fearlessly penetrate where they know that bonds and torments await them, and water with their blood the harvest which they sow. Let them show us thousands of Christians, converted by them, who lose all rather than renounce their faith; and who are ready to endure stripes, and imprisonment, and even death, for the name of Christ.† Nor are these the only instances which we can produce. About four years ago, the vicar-apostolic of Siam, Mgr. Florens, sent MM. Vallon and Bérard on a mission to Pulo-Nias, an island to the west of Sumatra. The first soon died, but after having made many converts; the second was stabbed to the heart, by a heathen, while in the act of administering baptism to some converts, and was, I believe, followed in his martyrdom by all or most of his new Christians.

Some years ago, a publication in this country stated that the Catholic religion depended for its stability upon its outward establishment, while the conversions made by the Bible were necessarily lasting and indelible.‡ But surely the examples which I have given of our conversions standing the trial of blood must amply confute this bold assertion. And, if it be thought that this is not so severe an ordeal as neglect and abandonment, it would be easy to prove by example that they can stand the test of even this. Ceylon is one strong instance; and I may mention the Corea, which had been for years without a missionary, and yet continued steadfast, and annually entreated for assistance, until one was supplied. In addition, a letter was received here

* Such is the account given us of the Methodist missionary at Pulo-Pinang, in a letter dated 5th March, 1828. *Annals*, No. xx. p. 213.

† It seems, however, that an attempt is about to be made to preach the Protestant religion in China. Drs. Reid and Matheson give us an account of the resolution carried by the Episcopal Church of New York. "that something should be done for China." Shortly after, they write that the ordination of Mr. Parker, as missionary to China, had taken place.—The Catholic missions, with their glorious martyrdoms are, of course, counted as nothing.—"A narrative of the visit to the American Churches." *Lond.* 1836, vol. i. p. 56.

‡ *Quarterly Review*, No. lxxiii. p. 3. The illustrations which the critic adduces are an admirable specimen of controversial logic. To demonstrate the permanency of Biblical conversion, he gives the example of one old woman, who, having received a Bible when young, at the Cape of Good Hope, was found to have retained and read it all her life, and sought out the missionaries after many years! The instability of Catholic conversion is proved by the state of Paraguay, since the suppression of the Jesuits. Now, Paraguay is Catholic still, although the beautiful organization of its community ceased with the body which ruled it. The writer concludes the religion with the peculiar form of government to which, in this happy instance, it gave rise.

out a short time ago from Macao, in which one is quoted from that very missionary, Yu, wherein he states the extraordinary fact that the Catholic religion still survives in Japan! And yet the last missionaries who were able to land on that island were five Jesuits, who, in 1642, arrived there only to suffer martyrdom; and the Catholic religion was supposed to have been rooted up by the sword. For that Church, too, has had its martyrs.*

Not far from these countries are the Philippine islands, in which M. Dubois estimates the number of Catholics under the direction of the Spanish Dominicans at two millions. Perhaps this may be considered by some too large a return; I will, therefore, read a passage from a learned work, by Dr. Prichard, which has, indeed, no connection with our subject, but wherein he incidentally mentions our missions in those islands as follows:—"A great number of missionaries have been sent out to the Philippine islands. The first attempt was made by the Augustines in 1565, and an emigration of ecclesiastics of various orders continued during the succeeding years. The several orders divided their spiritual provinces among them, and exerted themselves with the greatest assiduity, in spreading among the pagans and savages of these islands, the population of which has been stated at three millions of persons, the blessings of the Catholic faith. They soon rendered themselves familiar with the several languages of the people among whom they were to labor, and their labors appear to have been crowned with ample success. If we are to believe the narratives of these zealous and honest missionaries, miracles have been wrought by Heaven in their favor."† Thus does he acknowledge that our labors there have been successful; and an official report gives the number of native Christians in one province alone at 150,000.‡

There is another country, beyond the Gauges, where we have seen the efforts of Protestant missionaries fail, while those of ours have been, and still are, crowned with success. I allude to the Burmese empire, consisting of the kingdoms of Ava and Pegu. The mission of the Judsons, I showed you, on their own confession, proved a complete failure. But it is, perhaps, little known, that in the mean time a considerable community of native Catholics existed in that country. Its history is briefly this.

* See account of them in Butler's Saints' Lives. Feb. 5.

† "Researches into the Physical History of Mankind." 2d. ed. Lond. 1826, vol. I. p. 455.

‡ See "Piano," etc. *ut sup.*

In 1719, Pope Clement XI. sent Mgr. Mezzabarba as his ambassador to the Emperor of China, Kan-ghi.* His mission not having ended favorably, he returned to Europe, but left the clergy of his suite in different parts of the East. Two were sent into Ava and Pegu, the Rev. Joseph Vittoni, and F. Calchi, a member of the Barnabite congregation. After some difficulties, they obtained leave to preach and erect churches. The king sent Vittoni with presents to the Pope, and F. Calchi built a church at Siriam, the capital of Ava; but, worn out by fatigue, he died in 1723, in the forty-third year of his age. The mission was now so prosperous, that soon after, Benedict XIV. appointed F. Gallizia first vicar-apostolic, or bishop, in that country; F. Nerini was, however, the great apostle of this Church. The Catholic worship was publicly exercised, processions and funerals went through the streets, with all the pomp of a European Catholic country, without giving the slightest offence. In 1745, persecution overtook the Church, the bishop and two missionaries were massacred while on an errand of peace and charity; the Christians were dispersed, and F. Nerini saved his life by flying into India. He was recalled with honor in 1749, and erected the first brick building ever seen in that country; a church eighty feet long and thirty-one wide, with a house adjoining for the clergy. One Armenian alone contributed 7000 dollars to the pious work. Many other churches and schools were erected about that time.†

The mission continued to flourish, particularly under the direction of the two Cortenovis and F. Sangermano, author of an interesting work on the history and literature of that country.‡ He returned to Europe in 1808, to implore succor for his poor flock, but his zealous and learned order, which had till now supplied them with pastors, had been suppressed, with every other

* A partial account of this embassy is given by Auber, in his "China." *Lond.* 1824, p. 48.

† The following is a list of the principal Catholic establishments. At Ava was a large church, destroyed when the capital was removed. By a letter from F. Amato, 'in 1822, it appears that there was still a church and house there. At Siriam, now nearly in ruins, were two churches, with houses annexed, a college containing forty boys, and an establishment for orphan girls. In the city of Pegu, a church and house. At Moulā, a church, presbytery, and college, erected in 1770. The ground on which the college was built having been claimed, another was built by Cortenovis, who had 50 boys in it. In the environs of this city, six other churches. In Subaroa, two. At Chiam-sua-rocca six, which F. Amato served in 1822. In Ran-joon, a church and house, with a convent and orphan school.

‡ Description of the Burmese empire, translated from his MSS. by the Rev. Dr. Tandy, and published by the Oriental Translation Committee *Rome*, 1833, 4to.

similar institution of charity. The entire burthen was, therefore, borne by F. Amato, whose life was just prolonged till the arrival of a new supply of zealous missionaries sent from Rome in 1830. They were barely in time to afford the venerable priest the comforts of his religion. A farther supply was sent about a year ago.*

Another very interesting mission, successfully conducted by Catholics, is that among the savages of North America. These may be divided into two districts, Canada and the United States. As to the former, the French had no sooner had possession of Lower Canada, than they turned their attention to the conversion of the natives, and their success was such as completely to effect it. A letter from the Protestant Bishop of Quebec, dated 22d April, 1829, observes of them: "In Lower Canada they *all* profess the Roman Catholic religion. In Upper Canada, those within the province and the confines of it, *who are not heathens*, are Protestants, except a few near Sandwich."† The different missionary reports confirm the existence of large Catholic communities among the native tribes.

The report of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, for 1824, has the following passage:—"I cannot avoid mentioning a very interesting object, which presented itself about two leagues from St. Peter's, (in Duke of Kent's Island :) the Indian chapel, so called from its being exclusively the work of Indians. It is situated upon a delightful little island, with a house for the priest; this is served with tolerable regularity. St. Peter's is altogether a Roman Catholic settlement."‡ The report for 1825 gives the following notice of another congregation. "With difficulty, owing to the badness of the roads, I got to the village of St. Regis, inhabited almost entirely by Indians. They profess the Romish faith, *in common with all the Indians of the Lower Province.*"§ Again, in the year following:—"There are eighteen thousand Roman Catholics here, (Cape Breton Island,) chiefly from the Highlands of Scotland, with many French, and *five hundred Indians.*"||

It would be tedious to enumerate the missions existing in dif-

* This sketch is in a great measure drawn up from inedited materials in the archives of the Barnabite Fathers at Rome. I gave the substance of it in a note appended to Dr. Tandy's book, p. 222.

† Parliamentary Papers on the Aboriginal Tribes, Aug. 1834, p. 51.

‡ Report, &c. 1825, p. 85.

§ Report, &c. 1826, p. 117.

|| Idem, 1827, p. 75.

ferent parts of Canada, such as the one among the Iroquois at St. Regis, which is particularly flourishing; those of Montague to the Algonquins of Ilabenaqui, the Three Rivers, and Saint-Louis. But, perhaps, the most beautiful of all the Canadian missions is that of the Lake of the Two Mountains, which was founded in 1717, and continues under the direction of the order of Sulpicians. It consists of two villages, with a common church, and contains about 1200 Indians. During the winter they proceed to the north, to their hunting and fishing; and, being furnished with calendars by their pastors, observe every day appointed by the Church for fasting, and keep, with scrupulous exactness, all its festivals. Their manners are pure and simple; they all learn to read and write, and well understand the principles of their religion.

The missions of the United States suffered, perhaps, beyond any others, by the suppression of the Society of Jesus, as very considerable communities existed among the native tribes under its guidance. Much, also, they have suffered by the changes which the encroachments of the white men upon their territories have obliged them, repeatedly, to make in their abodes. Still, the recollection of their religion has never been lost; they have carefully preserved all the emblems and implements of the Catholic worship, and they have always endeavored to have their children baptized. Hence, whenever a missionary has gone among them, they have been easily regained. Indeed, I should rather say that they have themselves sought for aid, and that with such discrimination, as to show that they perfectly understood the difference between the Catholic and other teachers. A few examples will suffice.

A petition, dated August 12, 1823, was presented to the President of the United States, from the Ottawa Indians, from which the following is an extract:—"Confiding in your paternal kindness, we claim liberty of conscience, and beg of you to grant us a master or minister of the gospel belonging to the society of which were the Catholic company of St. Ignatius, formerly established at Michillimakinac, at Arbre-courbé, by F. Magnét, and by other Jesuit missionaries. Since that time, we have always desired similar ministers. If you grant us them, we will invite them to occupy the lands formerly held by F. Dujaunay, on the banks of the lake of Michigan."—Four months later, another petition was presented to Congress, by another chief of the same tribe, named Magati Pinsingo, or the Black Bird, in which he says:—"We desire to be instructed in the same principles of re-

ligion as our ancestors were, when the mission of St. Ignatius yet existed. (1765.) We shall deem ourselves happy, if it shall please you to send us a man of God of the Catholic religion.”*

In 1827, a chief of the Kansas came to St. Louis, in Missouri, and, in a public assembly, requested that some one might be sent to instruct his tribe in the manner of serving the Great Spirit. A Protestant clergyman rose and tendered his services. The Indian examined him from head to foot, and then replied, smiling, that he was not the sort of man whom he wanted. He added, that every time he came to Saint Louis, he was accustomed to go to the French church, where he had seen priests without families; these were the masters whom he desired to have. On his return home, he wrote to General Clarke, entreating him not to forget sending him a Catholic priest. Some delay took place; the chief renewed his request; and, upon the pressing instances of the agent, the bishop, Dr. Rosati, appointed the Abbé Lutz, a young German clergyman, to open a mission among the Kansas.†

Thanks be to God, the latest accounts from these interesting missions are such as to fulfil our desires. From the visitation made by Bishop Rézé to the mission of Arbre-Croché in 1835, it appears that the congregation of Uttawas consisted of about twelve hundred. Six or seven churches have been lately built among them; we are assured, that so far from these good Indians being addicted, like their neighbors, to the vice of drunkenness, they do not allow a drop of any fermented liquor to come near their settlement.

At Saut-Ste-Marie the Bishop was received by the Indians with a discharge of musquetry; and during his stay there, the whole time was dedicated to exercises of devotion. More than a hundred were confirmed. At Meckinack, a hundred and twenty received confirmation; and at Green-Bay, where a splendid church has been built, and where a seminary and convent will shortly be opened, one hundred and thirty, mostly Indians, were admitted to the same sacrament. The same reports‡ give a lamentable picture of the state of the Protestant missions in the neighborhood, from the frightful prevalence of intoxication among their Indians.

* “*Annales de l'Association pour la Propagation de la Foi.*” No. ix. *Paris*, 1822, pp. 102-104.

† *Idem*, No. xviii. 1829, pp. 550-561.

‡ *Idem*, No. xlv. Jan. 1836, p. 293-298.

Fourteen years ago, the Pootewatamis, who had been left with out any spiritual assistance since the removal of the Jesuits from among them, and who, consequently, preserved little more than a traditional remembrance of Christianity, applied to the governor of Michigan to send them a priest, or *robe noire*, as they describe them. A Baptist minister was sent; but they soon discovered the difference, and said that they wanted some of the priests of whom their fathers had told them so many good things. They were told that the government had nothing to do with Catholics, and that they must try the preacher who had been sent them. Violent dissensions soon rose among them; presents and strong liquors were distributed in vain, and, in a few years, thirty-three Indians had been assassinated in their feuds. In 1830, a Catholic priest was promised them by the Vicar-General of Cincinnati. Every opposition was made by the government, who refused to give up the Baptist mission; but at length the Catholics prevailed; and there is now there an edifying congregation of seven hundred natives, under the care of a Belgian priest.

M. Boraga, an Illyrian, obtained permission of the Bishop to open a new mission among the Indians on the Grand River; and, in two years, he has formed a congregation of two hundred souls.*

I must cut short these details; but I cannot omit just mentioning the Spanish missions among the natives of California, which have been no less successful.

As I have wished, throughout this lengthened discourse, to contrast, as much as possible the fruits obtained by the missionaries of different communions on the same spot; and as I, perhaps, may have appeared to speak with more than usual severity of the conduct of the American missionaries in the South Sea Islands, I will conclude my narrative with a brief account of the progress made by the Catholic religion there. I have had occasion to speak of the persecutions endured by our brethren in China, and other countries, from the hands of pagans; but here we have bonds and sufferings inflicted by Protestant missionary rulers of those unfortunate countries.

A recent traveller mentions an interview which he had with a native princess of one of these islands, wherein he asked her upon what grounds she had become a Christian. Her reply was, "Because Mr. Bingham, who can read and write so well, tells me that it is the best religion; and because I see the English and Americans, who are Christians, are superior to us;" but, she

* Ibid. p. 303.

added, that it was only an experiment ; and if it did not answer, they would return to their old worship.*

To these countries, in the year 1826, three Catholic missionaries were sent, and commenced their work by opening an oratory, in which there was a representation of our blessed Saviour crucified. The natives naturally came and asked what this signified, and the missionaries took occasion to explain the mystery of redemption ; for it was impossible, without such a representation, to convey to the untutored and simple savages the history of our Saviour's passion. The consequence was, that they soon began to have persons under instruction. But, after two or three years, they were banished from the island by the power of the American missionaries, and took refuge in California. In 1833, the Catholics were summoned before these authorities, and ordered to attend the Protestant worship. On their refusal, they were condemned to hard labor on the public roads. A task was apportioned to them, and after that had been executed, they were again summoned, and asked if they would frequent the Protestant service. On their once more declining, they were allotted another task. This was repeated until the fourth time ; when some of them demurred on this account, that hitherto they had been allowed to work in bodies, entirely composed of Catholics, whereas now they were ordered to be mixed with convicts, and men of the worst character, condemned for every sort of crime, the lowest and worst refuse of society. The Catholics refused to obey on this ground, and begged to be allowed to work alone. The order, however, was peremptorily urged ; and not only so, but further command was given, to separate the wives from their husbands, and make them work in different parts of the island. They consulted their catechist, the only person whom they had to advise them, if they should obey. He assured them that there could be no sin in working in such company, if commanded by their ruler, on account of religion, whereas it would be sinful to disobey his orders. They took his words literally, and, as the sentence had only been pronounced by a commissary, insisted upon hearing it from the chief. Force was resorted to, the men and women were separated, and attempts were made to put them in irons. They, however, prevailed in their demand to be taken before the chief ; but, on their way, the English consul rescued them, and secured them in his house from the persecution of the

* Kotzebue, "Narrative of a Second Voyage round the Globe," vol. II.

Protestants. A letter of thanks was written to him by the missionaries from their exile.

Here, then, is a persecution of Catholic converts by the ministers of a Protestant religion, and a system of penal infliction pursued against those who would not abandon our religion; a system carried to such an extent, that a female of royal blood was for a time terrified from embracing it, by the threat of being sentenced to public hard labor. Here, as everywhere else, the Catholics persevered in their faith; but, what shall we say of the oft repeated boast, that Protestantism ever abhors religious persecution, and only Catholicity is of an intolerant and cruel spirit?

In April, 1833, the king published a decree, whereby all were left at liberty to neglect or attend the Protestant Churches.* The moment the decree was passed, the churches became deserted and empty; and the islanders rushed madly to their wonted sports, which had been forbidden, while the Catholics did not lose a single convert, nor did any of them frequent the games without permission of their catechists. The return of the missionaries was expected, and a bishop, Mgr. Rouchoux, has been appointed to the mission.†

Now, let any person contrast the conduct of the two Churches; the one endured persecution, and yet remained faithful; the other was supported by the law, and the moment compulsory attendance was taken off, was abandoned by its proselytes. Such a comparison, joined to the many similar examples which I have given this evening, furnishes us with matter of serious reflection, and must, I am sure, be a subject of great consolation and encouragement to those who profess the true faith of Christ.

I cannot conceive a more delightful study, than the peculiar manner in which Christianity can adapt itself to every possible state and condition of mankind. Every other religious system has been adapted for one peculiar climate or character. No ingenuity, no talent, could ever have induced the wild Huron to embrace the amphibious and abstemious religion of the Ganges, to spend half his day, and hope for his sanctification, in long and frequent ablutions in his freezing lakes, or to abstain from animal food, and subsist on vegetables, in a climate where stern nature would have forbidden such a course. The soft and luxurious inhabitants of Thibet could never have transplanted into

* Kotzebue tells us that he himself saw the poor natives driven into the church by blows with a stick.

† "Ami de la religion," 17th July, 1834.

their perfumed groves the gloomy incantations and sanguinary divinities of the Scandinivian forests, or listened with delight to the sagas, and tales of blood and glory which nerved the heart of the Sea-king, amidst the storms of the North. Nor could he have ever learnt and practised, in his rude climate, the religions of the East, with their light pagodas, their gaudy paintings, their varied perfumes, and their effeminating morals. The worship of Egypt sprang from the soil, and must have perished, if transplanted beyond the reach of the Nile's inundation; that of Greece, with its poetical mythology, its Muses, its Dryads, and its entire Olympus, could only be the creed of a nation, which could produce Anacreon and Homer, Phidias and Apelles. Nay, even the Jewish dispensation bears manifest signs that its Divine Author did not intend it for a permanent and universal establishment. But Christianity alone is the religion of every clime and of every race. From pole to pole, from China to Peru, we find it practised and cherished by innumerable varieties of the great human family, varieties whether we consider their constitutions, their mental capacities, their civil habits, their political institutions, their very physiognomy and complexion.

But let us be just to ourselves; it is only the Catholic religion which possesses this beautiful faculty of suiting every character, national and individual, by becoming all to all, of uniting by a common link the most discordant elements, and fashioning the most dissimilar dispositions after the same model of virtue, without effacing the lines of national peculiarity. Lutheranism was for years forced upon the docile natives of Ceylon, and engendered the most horrible of religious chimeras—the worship of Christ united to the service of devils! The Independents have labored long and zealously for the conversion of the teachable and uncorrupted natives of the Sandwich and Society Islands, and they have perfectly succeeded in ruining their industrious habits, exposing the country to external aggression and internal dissension, and disgusting all who originally supported them.

But, on the other hand, the Catholic religion seems to have a grace and an efficacy peculiar to itself, which allows it to take hold on every variety of disposition and situation. It seems to work like that latent virtue of some springs, which slowly removes every frail and fading particle of the flower or bough that is immersed in them, converts them into a solid and durable material, and yet preserves every vein and every line which gave them individuality in their perishable condition. Its action is independent of civilization: it may precede it, and then it is it

narbinger; it may follow it, and then it becomes its correctiva. You have seen it alone raise the savage, even in his wilds, to the admiration and acceptance of the most sublime and most incomprehensible mysteries; you have beheld it in India, nerving its followers alone against the demoralizing influence of the country.

And if he who planteth, and he who watereth, is nothing, but the Lord alone giveth the increase, and if this constant and enduring success can be but the result of a divine blessing, shall not we conclude, that the kingdom of God hath been hereby brought unto so many nations, and that the system here pursued is that whereon His blessing and promise of eternal assistance was pronounced? Let us then rejoice that He has given us so consoling an evidence of His assistance to His Church; and as it has been evinced in one part of her commission, that of successfully teaching all nations, so has it been no less secured upon the other, that of teaching all things which He hath commanded, until the end of time.

LECTURE THE EIGHTH.

ON THE SUPREMACY OF THE POPE.

MATTHEW xvi. 17, 18, 19.

"Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."

THE line of demonstration, which has perhaps been somewhat interrupted by the two last discourses, has, I trust, my brethren, led you to form a conception of the Church of Christ conformable to the imagery employed and the institutions described in God's written word. It has been presented to you in both, under the form of a sacred kingdom, wherein all the parts are cemented and bound firmly together, in unity of belief and practice, resulting from a common principle of faith, under an authority constituted by God. But the application of this discovery has been necessarily postponed; for we have but vaguely determined the existence of this authority in the Church of Christ, without defining where, how, or by whom, it has to be exercised.

The tendency, so far as we have examined, of every institution in the Church, to produce and cherish this religious unity, will lead us naturally to suppose, that the authority which principally secures it, must likewise be convergent, in its exercise, towards the same attribute. We saw how, in the old law, the authority constituted to teach, narrowed in successive steps, till it was concentrated in one man and his line;* we saw how all the figures of the prophets led us to expect a form of government justly symbolized as a monarchy;† and although God is to be its Ruler, and the Son of David its eternal Head, yet as their action upon man is invisible and indiscernible, while the objects

* Lect. iv. p. 86.

† P. 89. See also, for the fuller development of this idea, a Sermon on the Kingdom of Christ, in "Two Sermons," &c., London, 1832.

and ends held in view, such as unity of faith, are sensible, and dependent on outward circumstances, we might naturally hope to find some such vicarious or representative authority, as would, and alone could, secure their advantage to the Church.

Indeed, it would appear quite unnatural, that every other institution therein should be outward and visible, and the one, of all others most necessary to give them efficacy, be of a contrary nature, and such as could have no power over the elements which it was intended to control.

It is to the examination of this important point that I wish to turn your attention this evening; and in the results of our inquiry, I trust that you will find the perfect completion of that plan which I have hitherto unfolded. For as, beginning with the foundation, laid in the simplest principles, and based on the word of God and the institutions of both covenants, we have seen gradually built up before us this sacred dwelling-place of God with men, so may this portion which I will now add be considered the cope-stone to the entire edifice, whereby it is fastened and held together, and close united, and at the same time crowned,—that which at once secures and adorns, strengthens and completes it.

But, on entering, as you will naturally have surmised that it is my intention to do, on the Supremacy of the Holy See, I feel myself met by so many popular prejudices, so many repeated misrepresentations, as to make some preliminary observations necessary. What then do Catholics mean by the Supremacy of the Pope, which for so many years we were required to abjure, if we would be partakers of the benefits of our country's laws? Why, it signifies nothing more than that the Pope or Bishop of Rome, as the successor of St. Peter, possesses authority and jurisdiction, in things spiritual, over the entire Church, so as to constitute its visible head, and the viceregent of Christ upon earth. The idea of this Supremacy involves two distinct, but closely allied, prerogatives: the first is, that the Holy See is the centre of unity; the second, that it is the fountain of authority. By the first is signified that all the faithful must be in communion with it, through their respective pastors, who form an unbroken chain of connection from the lowliest member of the flock, to him who has been constituted its universal shepherd. To violate this union and communion constitutes the grievous crime of schism, and destroys an essential constitutive principle of Christ's religion.

We likewise hold the Pope to be the source of authority; and

all the subordinate rulers in the Church are subject to him, and receive directly, or indirectly, their jurisdiction from and by him. Thus the executive power is vested in his hands for all spiritual purposes within her; to him is given the charge of confirming his brethren in the faith; his office it is to watch over the correction of abuses, and the maintenance of discipline throughout the Church; in case of error springing up in any part, he must make the necessary investigations to discover it and condemn it; and either bring the refractory to submission, or separate them, as withered branches, from the vine. In cases of great and influential disorder in faith or practice, he convenes a general council of the pastors of the Church; presides over it in person, or by his legates; and sanctions, by his approbation, its canons or decrees.

That, with such a belief concerning the high prerogatives of the sovereign Pontiff, the greatest veneration should be felt towards him by every Catholic, cannot be matter of surprise. It would, on the contrary, be unnatural to suppose that a respect commensurate with his high office could be refused. When St. Paul had severely reproved Ananias, for ordering him to be most unjustly smitten on the mouth, and when they that stood by said, "Dost thou revile the high-priest of God?" St. Paul replied: "I knew not, brethren, that he was the high-priest: for it is written, thou shalt not speak evil of the prince of thy people."* From which words it is plain, that a respect and honor is due to any one constituted in such a dignity, independent of his personal virtues or qualifications. It follows no less, that such high dignity may be awarded without reference to the exemption of its holder from sin and crime. In fact, it is a misrepresentation often repeated, that Catholics imagine the supreme Pontiff to be free from all liability to moral transgression, as though they believed that no action performed by him could be sinful. It can hardly be necessary for me to deny so gross and so absurd an imputation. Not only do we know him, however exalted, to be as much under the curse of Adam as the meanest of his subjects, but we hold him to be exposed to even greater dangers from his very elevation; we believe him to be subject to every usual cause of offence, and obliged to have recourse to the same precautions, and the same remedies, as other frail men.

The supremacy which I have described is of a character purely spiritual, and has no connection with the possession of

* Acts xxiii. 4, 5

any temporal jurisdiction. The sovereignty of the Pope over his own dominions is no essential portion of his dignity: his supremacy was not the less before it was acquired, and should the unsearchable decrees of Providence, in the lapse of ages, deprive the Holy See of its temporal sovereignty, as happened to the seventh Pius, through the usurpation of a conqueror, its dominion over the Church, and over the consciences of the faithful, would not be thereby impaired.

Nor has this spiritual supremacy any relation to the wider sway once held by the pontiffs over the destinies of Europe. That the headship of the Church won naturally the highest weight and authority, in a social and political state grounded on Catholic principles, we cannot wonder. That power arose and disappeared with the institutions which produced or supported it, and forms no part of the doctrine held by the Church regarding the papal supremacy. But on this, and other similar subjects of too ordinary prejudice, I may add some farther remarks, should time permit, at the conclusion of this evening's discourse.

As the pre-eminence claimed by the Catholic Church for the Bishop of Rome is based upon the circumstance of his being the successor of St. Peter, it follows that the right whereby that claim is supported must naturally depend upon the demonstration that the apostle was possessed of such superior authority and jurisdiction. The subject of this evening's disquisition thus becomes twofold; for, first, we must examine whether St. Peter was invested by our Saviour with a superiority not merely of dignity, but of jurisdiction also, over the rest of the apostles; and if so, we must farther determine, whether this was merely a personal prerogative, or such as was necessarily transmitted to his successors, until the end of time.

I. It was a usual practice among the Jewish teachers to bestow a new name upon their disciples, on occasion of some distinguished display of excellence; it had been the means occasionally used by the Almighty of denoting an important event in the lives of his servants, when he rewarded them for past fidelity, by bestowing upon them some signal pre-eminence. It was thus that he altered the names of Abraham and Sara, when he made with the former the covenant of circumcision; promised to the latter a son in her old age; and blessed both, that from them might spring "nations and kings of people."* It was thus that

* Gen xvii 5, 15.

Jacob received from him the name of Israel, when, after wrestling with an angel, assurance was given him that he should ever be able to prevail against men.* It is singular, that the moment Simon was introduced to our blessed Redeemer, he received a promise that a similar distinction should be given to him. "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona, thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter."†

It was on the occasion of his confessing the divine mission of the Son of God, that the promise was fulfilled. At the commencement of our Saviour's reply, he still calls him by his former appellation. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father, who is in heaven." He then proceeds to the inauguration of his new name. "And I say to thee that thou art Peter." According to the analogy of the instances above given, we must expect some allusion in the name to the reward and distinction with which it was accompanied. And such is really the case. The name Peter signifies a *rock*; for in the language spoken upon this occasion by our Saviour not the slightest difference exists, even at this day, between the name whereby this apostle, or any one bearing his name, is known, and the most ordinary word which indicates a rock or stone.‡ Thus the phrase of our Redeemer would sound as follows to the ears of his audience: "And I say to thee that thou art *a rock*." Now see how the remaining part of the sentence would run in connection with the preamble: "and upon *this rock* I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Such is the *first* prerogative bestowed upon Peter: he is declared to be the rock whereon the impregnable Church is to be founded.

2. Our Saviour goes on to say, "And I will give thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in Heaven." The second prerogative is the holding of the keys, and the power of making decrees, which shall be necessarily ratified in Heaven.

3. To the two ample powers given here we must add a third distinguished commission, conferred upon him after the resurrection, when Jesus three times asked him for a pledge of a love superior to that of the other apostles, and three times gave him a charge to feed his entire flock,—his lambs and his sheep. "When, therefore, they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter;

* Ib. xxxii. 28.

† In Syriac *Kipho*.

Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith to him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He saith to him again, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He said to him the third time: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he had said to him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said to him: Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee. He said to him: Feed my sheep.”*

On the strength of these passages, principally, the Catholic Church has ever maintained, that St. Peter received a spiritual pre-eminence and supremacy. And, indeed, if in these various commissions a power and jurisdiction was given to Peter, which was proper to him alone, and superior to that conferred upon all the other apostles, it will be readily acknowledged, that such supremacy, as we believe, was really bestowed upon him by God.

Now, his being constituted the foundation of the Church, implies such jurisdiction. For, what is the first idea which this figure suggests, except that the whole edifice grows up in unity, and receives solidity, from its having been mortised and riveted into this common base? But, what can be simply effected, in a material edifice, by the weight or tenacity of its component parts, can only be permanently secured in a moral body by a compressive influence, or by the exercise of authority and power. We style the laws the *basis* of social order, because it is their office to secure, by their administration, the just rights of all, to punish transgressors, to arbitrate differences, to insure uniformity of conduct, in all their subjects. We call our triple legislative authority the *foundation* of the British Constitution; because from it emanate all the powers which regulate the subordinate parts of the body politic, and on it repose the government, the modification, the reformation of the whole.

And observe, I pray you, that this reasoning excludes the possibility, not only of a superior, but even of an equal and co-ordinate authority. For, if the laws be not supreme, but there exists a rule of equal force, and not subject to their control, yet moving in the same sphere, and acting upon the same objects, you will own that they are no longer the basis of an order which they cannot guaranty and preserve. If a new authority were to arise in the state, equally empowered to legislate, to govern

* John xxi. 15-17.

and direct, with the present supreme authorities, without their being able to interfere, and setting them at defiance, I ask you if the whole political fabric would not be necessarily dissolved, and if a general disorganization would not ensue? Is it not plain that these authorities would lose their present denomination, and no longer form the foundation of our constitution? Apply this reasoning to the case of Peter. *He* is constituted the foundation of a moral edifice; for such is the Church. The appointment itself implies a power to hold together the materials of the building in one united whole; and this we have clearly seen to consist in the supreme authority to control and to govern its constituent parts.

It has been argued—and it is the only interpretation of the text whereby our opponents can make even a specious opposition—that this character of Peter was fulfilled in his being the first sent to convert both Jews and Gentiles, so that the Church might be said to rise and spring from him; and that, in this sense, he was the foundation of the Church. But, my brethren, was he thereby made the *rock* whereon this Church was founded? Had our Blessed Saviour said, “Thou shalt *lay* the foundation of my Church,” this sense might have been given to his words. But is there no difference between such a phrase, and “thou shalt be the rock on which *I* will build it?” In other words, can this figure imply nothing more than that he should give a beginning to the edifice; that he should lay the first stone? Would any one give to another the name of a *rock*, to signify *this* relationship between him and a building? Is there no idea of stability, of durability, of firmness, conveyed by the name, but only one of simple commencement?

But let us reason a little closer. Would any one presume to apply to it a parallel instance? The Gospel was first preached to the Irish by St. Patrick, and to the Anglo-Saxons by St. Augustine; would you dare to say that Patrick or Augustine were the foundation of those two Churches, or the rock whereon they were built? When Jesus Christ is said to be the foundation upon which alone any one can build,* would you allow the Arian to maintain, that from this text nothing more could be concluded, than that Christianity sprung from him, and not that he is “the finisher, as well as the author of our faith,”† that he is the object as well as the institutor of our belief? When we are said to be “built upon the foundation of the apostles,” would

* 1 Cor. iii. 11.

† Ephes. ii. 20.

you allow the freethinker to assert that this gave them no other distinction than that of having first *preached* the faith. and that it is not meant that their authority gives evidence of Christianity, or of its truth? And yet these would have a right to argue thus, if, from Peter's being called the rock whereon the Church is founded, no other consequence could be drawn than that he was the person who had to commence its formation.

Secondly, our Saviour does not merely say, that Peter is the rock whereon the Church is to be founded; but, moreover, that, *in consequence* of this foundation, this Church is to be impregnable and immovable. "Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." I say, that this sentence evidently implies that the Church is to be imperishable, *in consequence* of this foundation upon Peter; because the connection between the two ideas, of a firm foundation and a durable building, is so close and natural, that the usages of language oblige us to consider them as brought together only in consequence of that connection. To prove this by a familiar instance: when our Saviour says, that the foolish man "built his house upon sand, and the floods came, and the wind blew and beat upon that house, and it fell,"* we instantly conclude, though it be not expressly said, that the easy fall of that house is meant to be attributed to the instability of its foundation. In like manner, we should have attributed the firmness of that of the wise builder to the circumstance mentioned, that it was founded upon a rock, even though our Saviour had not himself expressly given the same reason.† In our instance, therefore, as the Church of God is said to be founded upon Peter, as on a rock, and, at the same time, is declared to be proof against the powers of destruction, so we may conclude that this security from ruin is the natural consequence of its being so founded. Peter, then, is not merely the commencer of the Church, but its real support; and this, as we have already seen, requires power and authority.

The second prerogative of Peter, the commission of holding the keys, and of binding and loosing, no less implies jurisdiction and power. This has also been explained in the same manner as though it only implied that Peter should *open* the gates of the Church to Jews and Gentiles. But can any one bring himself to believe in so cold, and, I might almost say, so paltry a signification as this? Where, on any occasion, among profane or sacred writers, was the image used in such a sense? The de-

* Matt. vii. 27.

† Verse 25.

livery of keys has always been a symbol of the intruding with supreme authority to command. It is so used in Scripture. God "will lay upon the shoulder" of the Messiah, "the key of the house of David: and he shall open, and no man shall shut; and shall shut, and no man shall open:"*—that is, God will give him supreme command in the house of David. In like manner, he is said to have received "the keys of death and of hell,"† to signify his supreme dominion over both.

Among oriental nations, this connection of real power with these, its emblems, is very strongly marked. We are told by the most accurate of Eastern annalists, how the keys of the temple of Mecca were in the hands of a certain tribe, and with it the command in that place; and so necessarily were the two conjoined, that, when the material keys were extorted by fraud from their possessor, he irrevocably lost his dominion over the sanctuary. And, on another occasion, he shows that the possession of the emblem really conferred the power which it represented.‡ Among European nations, the same analogy exists, though, perhaps, not so strongly. For, when the keys of a town are said to have been intrusted to any one by his sovereign, who ever thought of thereby understanding that power was given to him to unlock its gates, or shut them, to strangers and new-comers? And when the keys of a fort are said to have been delivered to a conqueror, who does not understand that possession of the strong place and dominion over it are no less transferred? And is not the same feeling implied by the practice, which now has become a mere ceremony, in this city, of its gate being closed when the monarch visits it, and the keys being presented to him by its

* Is. xxii. 22. Apoc. iii. 7. Comp. Job xii. 14, and Is. ix. 6, "the government is upon his shoulder."

† Apoc. i. 18.

‡ "Abu'l Feda. Specimen Histor. Arab." Oxon. 1806. The narrative alluded to occurs p. 474, of the text, and 533 of the version. We are there told that the care of the temple of Mecca was with the tribe of the Khozaites, till its representative, Abu-Gashan, in a state of intoxication, sold its keys to Kosay, in the presence of witnesses. Whereupon Kosay sent his son with them in triumph to Mecca, and restored them to the citizens. Abu-Gashan, on recovering his senses, repented, "when repentance was useless, and gave rise to the proverb, 'a more unfortunate loss than Abu-Gashan's.'" Pp. 482, 561, we have another illustration of the same idea. "The superintendence of the temple, and its keys, were with the children of Ismael, without doubt, till this authority came into the hands of Nabeth. After him, it fell into the possession of the Jorhamites, as is proved by a verse in a poem by Amer, son of Hareth, a Jorhamite.

"We possessed the rule of the holy house after Nabeth."

Thus, the two ideas of simply possessing the keys of a temple, and ruling over it, are manifestly identified.

chief magistrate; thereby implying that the supreme authority prevails over that which was merely delegated? When, therefore, Peter receives the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, or of the Church, we can only consider him as invested with its supreme command.

The same must be said of the power to bind and to loose. Whether we understand by it authority to decree and prohibit, or to punish and forgive, the only two interpretations which have any plausibility; or whether, with greater probability, we unite the two, it equally implies a prerogative of jurisdiction.

Finally, the unrestricted commission to feed the entire flock of Christ implies a primacy and jurisdiction over the whole. For the commission to feed is a commission to govern and direct. In the oldest classics, such as Homer, whose imagery approaches the nearest to that of Scripture, kings and chieftains are distinguished by the title of "shepherds of the people." In the Old Testament, the same idea perpetually occurs, especially when speaking of David, and contrasting his early occupation of watching his father's flocks, with his subsequent appointment to rule over God's people.* It is a favorite image with the prophets to describe the rule of the Messiah, and of God, over his chosen inheritance, after it should be restored to favor.† And our Blessed Redeemer himself adopts it, when speaking of the connection between him and his disciples,—his sheep that hear his voice and follow him.‡ In the writings of the apostles we find, at every step, the same idea. St. Peter calls Christ "the Prince of Shepherds,"§ and tells the clergy to *feed* the flock which is among them;|| and St. Paul warns the bishops whom he had assembled at Ephesus, that they had been put over their *flocks* by the Holy Ghost, to "*rule* the Church of God."¶

But, in fact, my brethren, to sum up the arguments drawn from these various commissions, if in them St. Peter did not receive jurisdiction and authority, neither did the apostles anywhere receive them. Take all the appointments ever given to them, and you will not discover any more decisive in favor of their authority, than their being called the foundations of the Church,—their being invested with the power of binding and loosing, with a certainty of ratification in Heaven,—and their being constituted rulers and pastors of Christ's flock.

* 2 Kings (Sam.) v. 2; Ps. lxxvii. 71, 72; Ezech. xxxii. 1-10; Jer. iii. 15; xxiii. 1, 2, 4; Nah. iii. 18, &c.

† Is. xl. 11; Mich. vii. 14; Ezech. xxxii. 10-23, &c.

‡ Jo. i.

§ 1 Pet. v. 4.

|| Ib. 2.

¶ Acts xx. 28.

St. Peter, then, my brethren, first in the vicinity of Cæsarea Philippi, and afterwards at the sea of Galilee, was solemnly invested with an authority and jurisdiction, distinctly conferred on him alone, as a reward for professions of belief and of love, which proceeded from him individually, and prefaced by a change of names, and a personal address, which showed them to be exclusively bestowed upon him. He was, therefore, invested with an authority of a distinct and superior order to that of his fellow apostles, which extended to the whole Church, by the commission to feed all the flock; which excluded the idea of co-ordinate authority, as the rock on which all are to be secured in unity; which supposed supreme command by the holding of the keys. And all this is more than sufficient to establish his supremacy.

There are but two means of escaping from this conclusion. The one denies the fact whereon our proofs are founded, and it is a weak objection; the second only denies the conclusions, and will require more attention.

In the first of these, I allude to the attempt made many years ago, and lately renewed, to prove that the rock upon which Christ promises that he will build the Church, was not Peter, but Himself. It is supposed that, having addressed this disciple in the first part of his sentence, and said to him, "thou art Peter," that is a rock, our Saviour suddenly changed the subject of the discourse, and pointing to himself, said, "And upon *this* rock I will build my Church." This interpretation you will perceive, my brethren, can boast more of its ingenuity than of its plausibility; it seems rather calculated to betray the shifts to which our opponents feel themselves obliged to resort, in order to elude our arguments, than to make any effectual resistance to their force. If the conjunctive particle, and the demonstrative pronoun *this*, be not sufficient to connect two parts of the same sentence, it is no longer in the power of grammatical forms to do so. If we may depart from the obvious signification of a phrase, by merely supposing that it was illustrated, when spoken, by signs or gestures suppressed in the narration, then the imagination must be allowed to be as useful as reason in the explanation of Scripture. Not only so, but all who are conversant with the corruptions of modern biblical science among the Protestants of Germany, are aware that by this expedient of imagining and supplying looks, gestures, and words, which they suppose to have been omitted, the most wanton attempts have been made to undermine the truth of the most important miracles of the New Testament. With just equal reason might the speech of God to

Abraham, when he changed his name, be divided; and after he addressed him in the words, "neither shall thy name be called any more Abram, but thou shalt be called Abraham, because I have made thee a father of many nations;" we might interpret the next words, "and I will make thee increase exceedingly,"* as addressed, not to the patriarch, but to his son Ismael; only by supposing, with equal right as in our Saviour's words, that the angel pointed towards the latter.

But there is another objection to our reasoning, of more plausibility and weight; because, without pretending to elude the obvious meaning of the words, it seeks to disarm them of all their force; because it admits the facts which are palpable, and only combats our conclusions. It is true, such is the argument to which I allude, that Peter received a power and jurisdiction, and that these were bestowed upon him individually and distinctively, as a reward due to his superior merits; but it is no less true that nothing was here given to Peter, but what was afterwards given to the twelve. In the Apocalypse, the twelve foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem have inscribed upon them "the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."† St. Paul tells the faithful, that the apostles are the foundation whereon they are built.‡ These, then, are no less the foundation of the Church than Peter. Again, in the 18th chapter of St. Matthew, precisely the same power is given to all the twelve to bind and loose on earth, with a corresponding effect in heaven, as is conferred on Peter in the 16th. Thus, the faculties here lavished on him are afterwards extended to all his companions, and whatever was given to him individually, is merged in the common and general commission, in which the rest were placed on a level with himself.

I will acknowledge, my brethren, that this argument at first sight has some appearance of strength; and I am not surprised when I see many Protestant commentators ground their rejection of the Supremacy of Peter almost exclusively upon this reasoning.§ It would be easy indeed to elude its force; but I wish to convert it into an argument in my favor. Listen, therefore, I pray you, with attention.—Peter, it is said, had no pre-eminence of jurisdiction bestowed upon him, because he received no power or commission individually, which was not, on another occasion, collectively bestowed upon the twelve. Now, is this the way in which you reason upon any other similar case in

* Gen. xvii. 5, 6.

† Apoc. xxi. 14.

‡ Ephes. ii. 20.

§ The "Protestant Journal" for this month, June, 1836, repeats it as quite satisfactory, p. 347.

Scripture, or is it not diametrically opposite? Let us try a few instances. Our B. Saviour constantly inculcated to all his disciples, and indeed to all his hearers, the necessity of *following* him. Only "he who *followeth*, walketh not in darkness;"* all must "take up their cross and *follow* him;"† all his sheep must know his voice and *follow* the shepherd.‡ When, therefore, he addressed individually to Peter and Andrew, to Matthew and the sons of Zebedee, the very same invitation, "Follow me," did it ever occur to you to reason, that, because the very same invitation was repeated, on other occasions, to all the Jews in common with themselves, therefore, they were not meant to follow Jesus in a distinct and more peculiar manner? Again, our B. Redeemer is repeatedly said to have tenderly loved all his apostles; he called them not servants, but friends—yea, no one could have greater love for another than he manifested to them, by laying down his life for them.§ When, therefore, John is by himself simply called the *beloved* disciple, as all the other disciples are also said to have been beloved, did you ever think of arguing that, as no more is predicated of him singly in one instance than is of all the twelve in others, therefore the love of Jesus for John was nothing distinctive and pre-eminent? Once more. To all the apostles was given a commission to teach all nations, to preach the gospel to every creature, beginning with Jerusalem and Samaria, unto the uttermost bounds of the earth.|| When, therefore, the spirit of God told them to separate Saul and Barnabas for the ministry of the Gentiles,¶ or when Paul individually calls himself their apostle, did you ever think of concluding that, as this individual commission was included and comprehended in the general one given to all, therefore Paul was never invested with any personal mission, received no more here than the other apostles, and only groundlessly arrogated to himself the apostleship of the Gentiles as his peculiar office? If in all these instances you would not allow such conclusions, how can they be admitted in the case of Peter? Why are his special powers alone to be invalidated by those which he received in common with the rest?

But I said I should not be content with answering the objection, but wished to gain an argument for my cause, and it is briefly this. From the instances I have given, it is evident that I may draw this canon or rule of interpretation in Scripture:

* Jo. viii. 12.

† Jo. x. 4.

Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Acts i. 8.

‡ Mark viii. 38.

§ Jo. xiii. 1; xv. 12, 15.

¶ Acts xiii. 2.

that when a call, a prerogative, a commission, is bestowed upon one person singly, though the very same may have been bestowed upon others collectively, and himself together with them, he must thereby be supposed to have received a distinct and superior degree of it from the rest. Thus, therefore, it must be with Peter. If the apostles were invested with authority in the commissions given to them, when even nothing but the same had been given to him individually, he must have thereby acquired a higher degree of that authority than they. But you will not be displeased to hear this objection answered by a Father of the third century, and of the Greek Church. Thus writes the acute and learned Origen. "What before was granted to Peter, seems to have been granted to all,—but as something peculiarly excellent was to be granted to Peter, it was given singly to him: 'I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.' This was done before the words 'whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth' were uttered (in the 18th chapter.) And truly, if the words of the Gospel be considered, we shall there find that the last words were common to Peter and the others, but that the former, spoken to Peter, imported a great distinction and superiority."* I might add, that the commission to feed the flock of Christ is nowhere given to the others; and if it were, I would ask, was it necessary that our Saviour should thrice require from Peter an assurance that he loved him *more* than the rest, in order to be qualified to receive an *equal* reward?"

There is still another passage, which I have not included in those before rehearsed; because there is no express bestowal of authority conveyed in it; although it clearly draws a distinction between the prerogatives of Peter and those of the other apostles, and shows how he was to be the object of a special care and protection. "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have *you*, that he may sift *you* as wheat. But I have prayed for *thee*, that thy faith may not fail; and *thou*, being once converted, confirm *thy* brethren."† In this passage, Christ seems to draw a marked distinction between the designs of Satan against *all* the apostles, and his own interest in regard of Peter. The prayer of our Saviour is offered for him specifically, that *his* faith may not fail, and that, when he shall have risen from his fault, he may be the strengthener of that virtue among his fellow-apostles. In him, then, there was to be a larger measure of this virtue; and wherefore, if he was not to be in any respect

* Com. in Mat. T. iii. p. 612.

† Luke xii. 31, 32.

superior to the other members of that body? Or, rather, does not the very commission to strengthen their faith imply his being placed in a more elevated and commanding station?

But I have been sufficiently diffuse upon these proofs that Peter received a supreme jurisdiction and primacy over the whole Church beyond the other apostles; and, in conformity with this view, we find him ever named the first among them,* ever taking the lead in all their common actions, always† speaking as the organ of the Church.‡

II. But, if Peter really enjoyed this distinction, as we have seen, was it not a personal privilege, which ended with him to whom it was granted? It is time to examine this point, and prove to you that he transmitted it to his successors in his see.

I presume it will not be necessary to enter into any argument, to show that St. Peter was the first Bishop of Rome. The monuments which yet exist in every part of it, and the testimony of ecclesiastical writers from the oldest times, put the fact above all doubt; and it is only sufficient to say, that authors of the highest literary eminence, and remarkable for their opposition to the supremacy of the Roman See, such as Cave, Pearson, Usher, Young, and Blondel,§ have both acknowledged and supported it. Among the moderns, it may be sufficient to observe, that no ecclesiastical writer of any note pretends to deny this fact. "To Peter," as St. Irenæus observes, "succeeded Linus, to Linus, Anacletus, then, in the third place, Clement."|| And from that moment the series of Popes is uninterrupted and certain to the present day. Thus much premised, I will proceed to state cursorily some of the arguments which prove the perpetuation of St. Peter's primacy in those who occupy his see.

1. In the first place, it has always been understood from the beginning, that whatever prerogatives, though personal, of jurisdiction, were brought to a see by its first Bishop, were continued to his successors. Thus the chair of Alexandria was first held by St. Mark, who, as a disciple of Peter, enjoyed patriarchal jurisdiction over Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis, and this jurisdiction remains to this day attached to his see. James first

* Mat. iv. 18; x. 2; Luke ix. 28, 32, &c.; Gal. i. 18; ii. 8.

† Mat. xiv. 28; xv. 15; xvi. 23; Acts iv. 19; xii. 13.

‡ Mat. xviii. 21; xxx. 27; xxvi. 23; Acts i. 15; ii. 14 seq.; iv. 8; v. 8; viii. 19; xv. 7. *et al. passim.*

§ See "Butler's Lives of Saints," June 29; or consult Baronius *Natalis Alexander* or any Church historian.

|| Adv. Har. l. iii. c. 3.

governed Jerusalem, and exercised authority over the Churches of Palestine, and the Bishop of Jerusalem remains a patriarch as yet. Peter first sat in the chair of Antioch, and that chair has ever retained its dominion over a large portion of the east. In like manner, therefore, if to the see of Rome he brought, not merely the patriarchate of the west, but the primacy over the whole world, this accidental jurisdiction became inherent in the see, and heritable by entail to his successors.

2. But this may appear to place the supremacy of the Holy See upon the same authority as that of the patriarchates, that is, on an ecclesiastical or disciplinary authority; whereas we maintain it to be held by a divine imprescriptible right. In the second place, therefore, I say it is transmitted as a divine institution in the Church of God, forming an integral and essential part thereof. Jesus Christ, my brethren, is the same yesterday and to-day. As he established his kingdom at the beginning, so was it to be perpetuated to the end; that form of government which he instituted at its foundation cannot be altered, but must continue to rule it till the end of time. Why else was not episcopal authority merely the prerogative of the apostles and disciples? Why did their successors, in their respective sees, grasp their crosier, and teach, and command, and correct, and punish, even as they had done, but that the very nature of the Church required that time should not alter its hierarchical constitution? Now, if Peter was made the foundation of the Church, it could not be intended that after his demise the foundation should be broken in pieces, and the stones of the sanctuary dispersed abroad.

Two objects are evidently included under the figure of such a foundation, unity and durability. For, unity in the building results from all its parts being connected by one united ground-plan or basement: and the early fathers understood that the supremacy was conferred on Peter, principally to secure this blessing to the Church. "One of the twelve is chosen," says St. Jerome, "that by the appointment of a head, the occasion of schism might be removed."* "To manifest unity," says St. Cyprian, "he authoritatively ordained the unity to spring from one."† "You cannot deny," writes St. Optatus, "that St. Peter the chief of the apostles, established an episcopal chair at Rome: this chair was *one*, that all others might preserve unity by the unity they had with *it*, so that whoever set up a chair against it,

* Adv. Jovin. Lib. i. Tom. i. Pa. ii. p. 168.

† De Unit. p. 194.

should be a schismatic and a transgressor. It is in this one chair, which is the first mark of the Church, that St. Peter sat.”*

Now, my brethren, if, to preserve unity in the Church, our blessed Saviour deemed the institution of a primacy necessary, while as yet the fervor of Christianity was glowing and unimpaired, while the apostles yet lived, dispersed over the world, each under the special guidance of Heaven, while the number of Christians was comparatively but small, while almost all the members of the Church belonged to one state, spoke one tongue, and were undivided by political or national prepossession; I will ask, was there less need of such a safeguard when the coldness of heavenly charity, the inferior lights of pastors, the wider dispersion of the faithful, and the division of states and kingdoms rendered the human means and the moral chances of preserving unity in belief and practice infinitely smaller? If, then, unity is an essential characteristic of the true faith, and if the appointment of a supremacy was made the means of insuring it, as the very idea of its foundation and the testimonies of the ancient Church demonstrate, then does that supremacy necessarily become equally essential to the true religion of Christ, as the unity which it supports; and consequently must be perpetual.

The second quality included under the figure of foundation upon this rock, is durability. I have already shown that the words of our Saviour clearly imply that the durability of the Church was a consequence of its foundation. But to be imperishable in consequence of its foundation, implies that the foundation itself will not fail, but shall remain for ever. We have seen that this foundation consisted in a supreme jurisdiction given to Peter; and the necessary conclusion is, that this supreme jurisdiction must last in the Church unto the end of time.

3. Thirdly, the authority of Peter must have been intended to be perpetual in Christianity, because we find that, from the earliest ages, all acknowledged it to exist in his successors, as their inherent right. Pope Clement examined and corrected the abuses of the Church of Corinth; Victor, those of Ephesus; Stephen, those of Africa. St. Dionysius, in the third century, summoned his namesake, patriarch of Alexandria, to appear before him to give an account of his faith, as he had been accused by his flock at Rome; and the holy patriarch obeyed without murmur. When St. Athanasius was dispossessed of the

* De Schism. Donat. Lib. ii. p. 28.

same see by the Arians, Pope Julius summoned all the parties before him, and was submitted to by all. Besides restoring this great patriarch to his see, he took cognisance of the cause of Paul, patriarch of Constantinople, and restored him in like manner. The great St. John Chrysostom, patriarch of the same Church, when unjustly deposed, wrote to Pope Innocent, entreating that he might be allowed a trial. I have selected these few instances of supreme authority, exercised by the Bishops of Rome over the prelates and even the patriarchs of the east, during the four first centuries, merely as specimens chosen from many more which time will not allow me to adduce.

Were I to attempt to give you, in full, the authority of the Fathers upon this subject, I should indeed prolong my discourse even beyond my usual measure. I will, therefore, content myself with a very limited selection. St. Irenæus, one of the oldest, writes as follows:—"As it would be tedious to enumerate the whole list of successors, I shall confine myself to that of Rome, the greatest, and most ancient, and most illustrious Church, founded by the glorious apostles Peter and Paul, receiving from them her doctrine, which was announced to all men, and which, through the succession of her bishops, is come down to us. To this Church, *on account of its superior headship*, every other must have recourse, that is, the faithful of all countries. They, therefore, having founded and instructed this Church, committed the administration thereof to Linus. To him succeeded Anacleus; then, in the third place, Clement. To Clement succeeded Evaristus, to him Alexander; and then Sixtus, who was followed by Telesphorus, Hyginus, Pius, and Anicetus. But Soter having succeeded Anicetus, Eleutherius, the twelfth from the apostles, now governs the Church."*

In the same manner, Tertullian gives a brief way of settling differences and controversies—by telling the contending parties to apply to the nearest apostolic Church—"if in Africa," he says, "Rome is not far, to which we can readily apply;" and then he adds:—"Happy Church! which the great apostles impregnated *with all their doctrines*, and with their blood."†

Coming down a little later, we find St. Cyprian using the very same language; for he writes in these terms:—"After these attempts, having chosen a bishop for themselves, they dare to sail, and to carry letters from schismatics and profane men to the chair of Peter, and to the principal Church, whence the sacerdotal

* Adv. Hæc. l. iii. c. iii. p. 175.

† De Præscript, c. xxxvi. p. 338.

unity took its rise; not reflecting, that the members of that Church are *Romans*, (whose faith was praised by Paul,) *to whom perfidy can have no access.*"* So that not only does he call it the See of Peter, and the principal Church, but that from which unity alone can spring, and which is secured from all error by an especial care of Divine Providence.

Another remarkable and still stronger testimony we find in the decrees of the council held at Sardica, in Thrace, at the request of St. Athanasius, at which 300 bishops were present. In its decrees we have this expression:—"It shall seem most proper, if from all the provinces the priests of the Lord refer themselves *to the head—that is, to the See of Peter.*"† So that here we have a council acknowledging that there was a final appeal to the head of the Church; and this is specified to be the See of Peter, where his successors resided.

St. Basil the Great has recourse to Pope Damasus, on the distresses of his Church: and to move him the more, gives instances of earlier interpositions by the Roman Pontiffs in the affairs of his See. These are his words:—"From documents preserved among us, we know that the blessed Dionysius—who with you was eminent for his faith and other virtues—visited by his letters our Church of Cæsarea; gave comfort to our forefathers, and rescued our brethren from slavery. But our condition is now much more lamentable.—Wherefore, if you are not at this time induced to aid us, soon all being subjected to the heretics, none will be found to whom you may stretch out your hand."‡ In another passage he says, that Eustathius, Bishop of Sebaste, being deposed, proceeded to Rome; what was transacted between him and the Bishop of that city he knew not; but on his return, Eustathius showed a letter from the Pope to the Council of Thyana, on which he was instantly restored to his See. So that here, an oriental Bishop appeals to the Pope, returns with a letter from him to a provincial synod: and, although it is evident, that in this case St. Basil thinks there was some cause for his deposition, yet, on the exhibition of the letter from the holy Pontiff, he is restored to his rights.

St. Jerome, writing to the same Pope, addresses him in such a strain as any Catholic of the present day might use, and perhaps goes even farther:—"I am following no other than Christ, united to the communion of your Holiness, that is, to the chair

* Ep. lv. p. 86.

† Ep. Synod. ad Julium Rom. Conc. Gen. T. ii. p. 661.

‡ Ep. lxx. ad Damasum, T. iii. p. 164.

of Peter. I know that the Church is founded upon that Rock. Whoever eateth the Lamb out of that House, is a profane man. Whoever is not in the ark, shall perish by the flood. But forasmuch as, being retired into the desert of Syria, I cannot receive the sacrament at your hands, I follow your colleagues, the bishops of Egypt. I do not know Vitalis; I do not communicate with Meletius; Paulinus is a stranger to me, (men of suspected faith:) he that gathereth not with you, scattereth."*

There is one passage, to which I alluded before, as containing the sentiments of St. John Chrysostom, which I will read, because it is particularly clear and energetic. He writes to Pope Innocent, Bishop of Rome, in consequence of having been deprived of his See, and treated with the greatest injustice:—"I beseech you to direct, that what has wickedly been done against me, while I was absent, and did not decline a trial, should have no effect; and they who have thus proceeded may be subjected to ecclesiastical punishment. And allow me, who have been convicted of no offence, to enjoy the comfort of your letters, and the society of my former friends."† Does not this suppose belief that the Bishop of Rome had jurisdiction, and power to punish, over the bishops of Asia? and is not this appeal to him, from a patriarch of Constantinople, a strong attestation of his supreme dominion in the universal Church? And again, we have these still stronger expressions:—"For what reason did Christ shed his blood? Certainly, to gain those sheep, *the care of which he committed to Peter and his successors.*"‡

These quotations are not in the proportion of one in twenty to those which I omit. But there is one class of passages which I must not pass over; I mean the repeated acknowledgments of general councils, that is, councils of the whole Church, of the supreme papal authority, in decisions on all ecclesiastical matters. This, on the one hand, is claimed on its behalf by the apostolic legates, who always presided, and was ever allowed by the fathers or bishops who composed the synod. For instance, in the council of Ephesus, Philip, one of the delegates from Pope Celestine, thus addressed the venerable assembly:—"No one doubts; indeed, it has been known to all ages, that the most holy Peter, the prince of the apostles, the pillar of the faith, and the foundation of the Church, received from our Lord the keys of the kingdom, and the power of binding and of loosing

* Ep. xiv. ad Damasum, T. iv. p. 19.

† Ep. ad Innoc. T. iii. p. 520.

‡ De Sacord. l. ii. c. 1. T. i. p. 372.

sins He lives unto this day in his successors, and always exercises that judgment in them. Our holy father, Celestine, the regular successor of Peter, *who now holds his place*, has sent us in his name to this sacred council,—a council convened by our most Christian emperors, for the conservation of the faith received from their fathers.”*

In like manner, the Fathers of the Council of Chalcedon, upon hearing the epistle of Pope Leo read to them, unanimously exclaimed,—“This is the faith of our fathers; Peter has thus spoken through Leo; the Apostles so taught.”† And when, at the close of the synod, they addressed that holy Pontiff, their expressions are so exceedingly remarkable, that I cannot refrain from quoting them: “In the person of Peter,” they write, “appointed our interpreter, you preserved the chain of Faith, by the command of our Master, descending to us. Wherefore, using you as a guide, we have signified the truth to the faithful, not by private interpretation, but by one unanimous confession. If, where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, he is there in the midst of them, how must he have been with 520 Ministers? Over these, *as the head over the members*, you presided by those who held your rank; we entreat you, therefore, to honor our decision by your decrees; and as we agreed with the Head, so let your Eminence complete what is proper for your children. Besides this, Dioscorus carries his rage against him, *to whom Christ entrusted the care of his vineyard, that is, against your apostolic Holiness.*”‡

Thus you see, my brethren, that this is no new doctrine, but that all antiquity supports us in the belief, that our Blessed Saviour gave to Peter a headship and primacy over his Church, and that it was continued, through the following ages, in the persons of his successors, the Bishops of Rome. We find these exercising acts of decided authority over the highest dignitaries of the Eastern Church; we see them acknowledged as supreme by the most learned fathers; we have recorded, in strong terms, the deference and submission even of general Councils to their decisions and decrees. And if all this suffice not to prove the belief of those ages in the Papal Supremacy, I know not how we can ever arrive at a knowledge of what they held on any subject.

4. But, in the fourth place, the best interpretation of a prophecy

* Conc. Gen. Tom. iii. Act. iii. p. 626.

† Ib. Tom. iv. p. 368.

‡ Ib. p. 834, 835, 883.

is the history of its fulfilment. The prophecies which foretell the dispersion and abandonment of Israel were doubtless obscure till the days of their accomplishment had arrived. Were the Jews to be merely deprived of their temple, or of every other form of collective worship? Were they to be simply destitute of a domestic government; or were they to be deprived of citizenship and community with the rest of the world? Read the prophecy by the light of history, and all is clear, consistent, and convincing. Then let us apply this rule to the promise made to Peter. A power, claiming to descend from him, is seen existing, from age to age, in the midst of Christianity, subject to none of the variations, vicissitudes, and interruptions of every temporal dominion. It forms the only clue which, unravelled and unbroken, winds through every century, and holds together the elements of sacred and profane history. For, while petty dynasties rise and dissolve around it, the chronicler can only fix the epochs of their commencement, their events, and termination, by referring them to the unfailing succession of *its* rulers. Nor does this perpetuity result from a blind homage paid to their authority. Again and again their patrimony is usurped by the foreigner, their capital is sacked by the invader, their See is laid in ashes by the barbarian; they are kept for generations in exile by their own turbulent subjects; they are cast into bonds, they are bereft of life,—all, in short, befalls them, which puts an end to mortal dynasties and human principalities. But an unknown vigor seems to animate this race of sacred princes; and though other bishoprics may be swept from the face of the earth, here Pontiff succeeds to Pontiff, in spite of every obstacle; the chapter for their election is now held in a distant province of Italy, then in France, or in Germany; still a successor is duly elected, and received by all; and every attempt to break their descent is rendered vain and abortive.

In the mean time, this establishment exercises an important influence over the civilization, the culture, and the happiness of men. With the virtues of its successive members, those of the entire earth seem to expand into bloom; with the rare but influential immorality of some among them, the whole Christian world seems to sympathize and to languish; the whole tide of human virtue rises and falls, flows and ebbs, only by their increase or wane. But its influence goes farther still. The fate of all religion seems interlaced with its destiny; for centuries this may be said nowhere to exist, except in its connection and dependence; no pastors but what receive their jurisdiction from it. **ne**

preachers but profess to have there learnt their doctrines; no faithful, but hope for salvation from being joined to its communion. Whatever is brilliant in religion, seems only to be a reflection of its light; forms and ceremonies, canons and laws, symbols of faith, and terms of communion—all are derived thence with implicit obedience.

My brethren, a system for so many centuries thus closely interwoven with Christianity, and regulating its very existence, cannot be a mere accidental modification; it must be either an integrant part of its scheme, or it must have existed thus long in its despite. It is either an important organ, necessary to its vital functions, and vigorously acting to the farthest extremities of the frame, yea, its very core and heart; or it is a monstrous concretion, which hath become deeply seated, and, as it were, inrooted, and it exerts an unnatural and morbid influence through the body. Do you wish to consider it in the latter sense? Then see what difficulties you incur.

First, you break in pieces, yea, utterly crush to dust all the most beautiful wonders of Christianity. The submission of the heart and of the will to the teaching of faith, the anchorage which hope giveth in another world, the bonds of religious charity and affection between persons of the most various dispositions; the attachment under every extremity to the great maxims of religion, all the learning of doctors, all the constancy of martyrs, all the self-devotion of pastors, all that makes Christianity something holier, nobler, diviner, than what earth or man had before produced; all these existed nowhere for ages, save in communion with this usurped authority, as you suppose it, and gloried in paying it deference and supporting it, and bearing testimony to it. You then proclaim that they may be testimonies to monstrous falsehood and deceit; you deprive them, consequently, of all efficacy in proof; and you must therefore seek elsewhere for the most touching and most beautiful evidences of Christianity.

Secondly, you must account for the regular unbroken support which it received from the providence of God. For the fate of human institutions is to grow, to flourish, and to wither: to be raised with labor, to stand for a while, then crumble for ever. Never was dynasty, never was kingdom prolonged for half its duration, never was the most favored design of God carried triumphantly through such varied vicissitudes. Nay, its lot seemed that of the just—tribulation appeared sent to try and chasten, and not to overthrow. Yet are we to suppose that this extraor-

dinary exertion of Providence was all in favor of an antichristian usurpation, which was misleading men and ruining the cause of God?

Lastly, you must account how the Almighty uniformly made use of this dreadful apostasy as the only means in his hand to preserve and disseminate his religion. As the only means to preserve it: for, during the lapse of so many centuries, not a single heresy—I speak of such as Protestants themselves must call by that name—was^d condemned, crushed, and eradicated, except by its means, and through its decrees: Arians, Macedonians, Eutychians, Nestorians, Pelagians, and a thousand more, were anathematized by the Popes; and thus alone the doctrine of the Church was kept pure, and its faith unimpaired by their errors. Councils were called, canons framed only under their names and authority; and thus the morals of the faithful were improved and preserved. As the only means to disseminate it: for all portions of the earth, which have been converted to Christianity since the days of the apostles, owe the benefit to the Holy See. Scotland, Ireland, England, Germany, Denmark, Hungary, Poland, and Livonia were converted, from the fifth to the tenth centuries, by missionaries sent from Rome. The East and West Indies are under the same obligation: they may be said to know nothing of Christianity, except as the faith of the Roman Church, to which they bow with submission. And I will say, without fear of contradiction, that while there is hardly a country under the globe where the sovereign pontiff has not *many* subjects, no other Church, as I have before shown, can boast of the power of conversion to any extent, or with any durability. Now, at the very time that you must suppose this antichristian system to have been employed by God, as his only instrument in preserving and disseminating Christianity, observe that it publicly boasted and referred to those very circumstances as a proof that it was the rock whereon Christianity was founded,—the representative of the only authority whereon it was to be received as coming from God. And would he not have been countenancing to the utmost so horrible an untruth and deceit, if you admit this hypothesis?

You will not tell me that God knows how to bring good out of evil, and can make use of the worst agents; and that it matters not if the gospel is preached even out of contention, so that it be preached.* Such means are his extraordinary resources, they

* Phil. i. 17

cannot be the ordinary course of his providence. I can conceive him sending a Sennacherib or a Nabuchodonosor, to convert his people, and purify them by chastisement; but I cannot, without blaspheming his goodness, imagine him giving such for their ordinary rulers, and intrusting to them, habitually and for ages, the protection of his inheritance and of his worship. I can imagine a Balaam, who came to curse, forced against his will to bring blessings upon the people of God, and prophesy the rising of the star from Jacob; but I cannot admit, without outraging his sanctity, that the prophets, from Samuel to Malachi, might have been a series of so many Balaams, dragged against their will to instruct a nation, whom they should have surpassed in wickedness. Nor could St. Paul have imagined all the apostles and teachers of the gospel for ages, publishing its doctrines only through a spirit of contention. Yet this is the parallel case, and such are the difficulties you incur, by supposing that the supremacy of the Holy See has existed in Christianity, in despite of the ordinances of God.

But admit it to have been given in Peter, and all is consistent; all is marvellous; all is beautiful. We trace through every age the fulfilment of the promise: we account for how it has stood the shock of so many convulsions: how it has risen unsubdued from under so many billows; how it has shaken off the mortality which gathers upon every sublunary establishment, and been the rock to which the parts of the vast edifice have been cemented, so as to have grown up into one holy building, and which has preserved them unshaken from age to age.

And it is, indeed, my brethren, an institution whose sublimity is worthy of God. To see religion thus become an object over which earth and its changes have no control; that scorns the boundaries which man's ingenuity or nature's bolder hand has traced, to intercept all communication between man and man; which can make its decrees respected and obeyed by nations who never heard the Roman name and conquests, save in connection with its truths; which can give a common interest, a bond of love, to people of the most different speech, and hue, and feature,—this is, indeed, the idea which we should naturally have formed of a religion coming from Him whose are the ends of the earth. What a thought, that when, on the coming festival of Easter, the sovereign Pontiff shall stretch forth his hand and bless his entire flock, that blessing will fly over seas and oceans and reach climes to which the sun will not yet have risen, and fall as a dew on Churches which will not receive tidings of that

day till long after the buds which are now swelling on the trees shall have seared and fallen into their autumnal grave!

It is painful to turn from these consoling thoughts, to meet the objections which prejudice or ignorance may make to this view of the papal power. But I know that some may here wish to step in, and remind me of the volumes that have been written on the crimes and iniquities of Popes. I shall be told that for ages they were but a worldly-minded race of men, only grasping at earthly power, and trying to tear crowns from the heads of sovereigns;—eager to grapple with all temporal dominion, and become at once the civil rulers and the spiritual masters of the world. In reply, I would first observe, that whatever may be the impressions of any individual regarding the character of some, or many, of the Roman Pontiffs, he has no right to apply them as a test for explaining the words of Christ, or for judging of the existence of an institution. Many holders of the Jewish high-priesthood disgraced their station, from Heli to Caiaphas, and yet was not the holiness of that state thereby lessened, nor its divine constitution; nor did our Saviour or St. Paul teach that worship and reverence were not to be shown it. We know that even among the apostles there was one capable of betraying his master,—of thus committing the foulest deed which the sun ever beheld: and yet does not that impair the character of the apostleship. And, in like manner, might we say, that if those Pontiffs who have disgraced their station were summed up, they would not bear the same proportion to those whose virtues have been an honor to Christianity, as the traitor Judas does to the apostolic body. If, therefore, the apostles' dignity was not impaired, or their jurisdiction lessened, by that circumstance; I ask whether this institution should be judged by the crimes of some among its possessors?

But on this subject there is a mass of deception or delusion constantly repeated, such as, if laid open, would astonish men, seeing how they had been led into such gross misapprehension. In the first place, it is customary to bind together the private, individual character of Pontiffs, and their public conduct; and yet there is a distinction necessary to be kept between them, as I observed at the commencement of this discourse. Our Saviour, in giving them such power, gave them a means of great evil as well as of the greatest good; yet did not, at the same time, deprive them of individual responsibility—he left them in possession of their own free will, in a position the most dangerous to which humanity could be exposed.

This supposes the possibility of a certain number being unworthy of their station; and that such has been the case, no one will deny: but, at the same time, in a number of instances, there is more misrepresentation than could be found in any other part of history. With regard to the Pontiffs of the first ages, no man will gainsay that they were all worthy of what they have received,—a place in the calendar of saints. Of the Pontiffs of the later ages, in like manner, it has been acknowledged, not only by Catholic but by Protestant writers,* not in former times, but very lately, that since the change of religion in some parts of Europe, by the Reformation, nothing could be more exemplary, or more worthy of their station, than the conduct of all those who have filled the chair of St. Peter.

The only part, then, of history, from which such objections can be drawn, is in those centuries which are commonly called the middle ages. Now, persons who profess to pass judgment on this period of history are, in general, totally unacquainted with its spirit; and without being competent to judge, by their true standard, of measures then pursued, but judging only from the no less peculiar and narrower views of their own time, many condemn the conduct of the Popes, as being directed by nothing but a desire of temporal aggrandizement and worldly imperial sway. But into this chaos and confusion, in which prejudice had plunged the history of those times, a bright light is beginning to penetrate, and it comes from such a quarter as will not easily give rise to suspicion. Within the last ten years, a succession of works has been appearing on the Continent, in which the characters of the Popes of the middle ages have been not only vindicated, but placed in the most beautiful and magnificent point of view. And I thank God, that they are, as I just said, from a quarter which cannot be suspected—every one of the works to which I allude being the production of a Protestant. We have had within these few years several lives, or vindications of the Pontiff, who has been considered the embodying type of that thirst for aggrandizement which is attributed to the Popes of the middle ages. I speak of Gregory VII., commonly known by the name of Hildebrand. In a large voluminous work, published a few years ago by Voigt, and approved of by the most eminent historians of modern Germany, we have the life of that Pontiff, drawn up from contemporaneous documents, from his own correspondence, and the evidence of both his friends and

* As by Ranke, in his *History of the Popes*.

enemies. The result is—and I wish I could give you the words of the author—that if the historian abstract himself from mere petty prejudices and national feelings, and look on the character of that Pontiff from a higher ground, he must pronounce him a man of most upright mind, of a most perfect disinterestedness, and of the purest zeal; one who acted in every instance just as his position called upon him to act, and made use of no means, save what he was authorized to use. In this he is followed by others, who speak of him with an enthusiasm which a Catholic could not have exceeded; and of one, it has been observed, that he cannot speak of that Pontiff without rapture.*

We have had, too, within the last two years, another most interesting work, a life of Innocent III., one of the most abused in the whole line of Papal succession, written by Hurter, a clergyman of the Protestant Church of Germany. He again has coolly examined all the allegations which have been brought against him; he has based his studies entirely on the monuments of the age; and the conclusion to which he comes is, that not only is his character beyond reproach, but that it is an object of unqualified admiration. And to give you some idea of the feeling of this work, I will read you two extracts, applicable to my subject in general. Thus writes our author:—"Such an immediate instrument in the hands of God, for the securing the highest weal of the community, must the Christian of these times, the ecclesiastic, and still more, he who stood nearest to the centre of the Church, have considered him who was its head. Every worldly dignity works only for the good of an earthly life, for a passing object; the Church alone for the salvation of all men, for an object of endless duration. If worldly power is from God, it is not so in the sense, and in the measure, and in the definitiveness in which the highest spiritual power of those ages was; whose origin, development, extent, and influence, (independently of all dogmatical formulas,) form the most remarkable appearance in the world's history."†

In another passage he thus speaks:—"Let us look forward and backward *from any period*, upon the times, and see how the institution of the papacy has outlasted all the other institutions

* Eichhorn, Luden, Leo, Müller, and many other Protestant writers; whose attestations I hope to find a better opportunity to give at length. The English reader has, since this discourse was delivered, been enabled to study the character of this great Pope, by the interesting life of him lately published by Mr. Bowden.

† Hurter Geschichte Pabst Innocenz III. und seiner Zeitgenossen, *Hamb* 1834, vol. i. p. 56.

of Europe; how it has seen all other states rise and perish: how, in the endless changes of human power, it alone invariable has preserved and maintained the same spirit; can we be surprised, if many look upon it as the rock which raises itself unshaken above the stormy waves of time?"*

But to conclude this subject, I trust that, by degrees, what is doing abroad may be better known among us; and when we begin to contemplate those ages in the same true spirit as our continental neighbors, we shall discover many misstatements relative to persons who are most deserving of our respect and admiration, even independent of religion. And consequently the objections brought against the divine authority of the papal supremacy from individual examples will be very much diminished. I have thus endeavored to give you a summary view of the arguments whereon we rest the supremacy of the successors of St. Peter. You have seen what is the ground on which we base it; clear texts of Scripture, interpreted, I am sure without violence, but simply by their own construction, and by reference to other passages in God's holy word. You have seen how this institution has been transmitted and maintained through a succession of ages and of pontiffs, until we reach the one who at present occupies the chair of St. Peter.

The sympathies of his immediate predecessors have been particularly alive to this portion of their flock, and the very Church in which we stand† bears testimony to what the Holy See has felt and thought in your regard. I allude particularly to that venerable High Priest of God, who, of all others, exemplified in himself the indestructible tenure of his dignity; inasmuch as the mighty Emperor, who endeavored to destroy it in his person, yielded to the fate of worldly things, while he again rose, and sat in peaceful possession of the throne of his ancestors. He, Pius VII., testified his affection for this very flock, by presenting to this church, when first erected, the splendid service of church-plate, which is yet here preserved. I was in Rome at the time; and I remember well an expression which he used, when some remonstrated with him for parting with the most valuable sacred vessels in his possession: his answer was, "The Catholics of England deserve the best thing that I can give them." And from this feeling of paternal affection, he who now sits in that

* Hurter *Geschichte Papst Innocenz III. und seiner Zeit*
vol. i. p. 79.

† St. Mary's, Moorfields.

chair has not degenerated. Of him it may be said, that never did any man pass through the ordeal of prosperity more unharmed. Raised, successively and rapidly, from the humble and mortified retirement of the cloister, to be first a prince, and then the ruler, of the Church, he has changed nought of the simple habits, the cheerful piety, and the unaffected cordiality, which characterized him there. To the triple coronet which surrounds his brow has been indeed added a thorny crown, in the political turbulence of his own dominions, and the spoliating and disobedient acts of some of his spiritual provinces. But from these painful topics he can turn with consolation, to view the daily advances of our holy religion in this and other distant countries, and the constant increase of his children, where not many years ago his title could scarce have been whispered without danger. And the name which he bears is one of bright omen for us. Twice has it been the source of grateful recollection to Catholic England. It was the first Gregory who sent Augustine and his companions to convert our ancestors to the faith; and when a giddy spirit of error threatened to overthrow and destroy the work, the 13th of the name stood in the breach, supplied the means of education to our clergy, and cherished in his bosom the little spark, which is now once more breaking into a beautiful flame. It is from the very house of the great Gregory, and of his disciples, Augustine and Justus,* that the present Pontiff came forth to rule the Church, animated with the same zeal, and attached to the same cause. Oh! may the same results attend his desires; may he live to see all the sheep, which are not of his flock, joined unto it, that there may be only one flock and one shepherd; that when Jesus Christ, "the prince of pastors," whose vicar he is, shall appear, we may all "receive a never-fading crown of glory."†

* The Church and Monastery of St. Gregory, on the Caelian Hill, possessed by the Camaldulose Monks, were the house of that Pontiff; and on the portico of the church is an inscription, recording, that thence went forth the first apostles of the Anglo Saxons. In this house, the present Pope lived many years, till created a cardinal.

† 1 Pet. v. 4

LECTURE THE NINTH.

RECAPITULATION OF THE LECTURES ON THE CHURCH.

JOHN iv. 20.

"Our fathers adored on this mountain, but you say that Jerusalem is the place where men should adore."

SUCH, my brethren, was the question which divided men, and men who believed in only one God, at the time of our Saviour's mission; and precisely similar is the question which may be said to divide us now. There are some of us who say, that only we tread the true path of salvation—that only where we adore, is true sacrifice offered to the living God; and, on the other hand, there are who reply, "This is the place where our fathers have worshipped—this is the religion which we have been taught by our ancestors: why, therefore, should we be expected to abandon it on account of the claims of another, and a more exclusive system?" Happy would it be for us, if, like the Samaritan woman in this day's gospel, we had near us One to whom we could refer all our disputes—to whose judgment we should all submissively bow! Happy should we be, could we, in the presence of our blessed Redeemer, visible amongst us, examine our respective claims to be considered the true Church of Christ; and that we could be sure, through His personal decision, that the conclusions we come to are such as God hath sanctioned!

But, unfortunately I may say for us, although no doubt in the decrees of eternal Providence, most righteously, it is not given us to have such an absolute and final award pronounced in our differences; and hence it is our duty, with all regard to charity, to bring forward our respective claims—and more especially is this *our* duty, who feel sure that we rest them on the most solemn, on the most dignified, and the most highly sanctioned ground—if so, haply, we may bring to some conclusion the endless disputes touching religion, which have too long divided us, and those who have gone before us in the land. I have, so far as my small abilities allowed me, endeavored to present you with a sim

ple, unvarnished exposition of the Catholic doctrine regarding the rule of faith. I have stated to you the grounds on which we base it—the authority, that is, of God's unerring word; so that we find ourselves bound to submit to the decisions, and to obey the authority, of a power which we are convinced has been established by Him. But, having extended my subject through so many lectures, and having, consequently, some reason to fear that, by being thus diluted, the arguments may have lost some what of their force, I propose, before entering, on Sunday next, upon a new and more important topic,* this evening to recapitulate the arguments which I have spread over so many successive discourses, that so their strength may be more condensedly and compactly pressed upon your consideration.

I need not state to you again the great and important difference between us and more modern creeds; that difference of which an eminent English divine, the one who, perhaps, has written most strongly in favor of the Protestant rule, observes, that “the whole of modern religion may be said to differ essentially on this one point—what is the groundwork whereon faith is to be built?† I rehearsed to you, in my preliminary discourses, the respective opinions of the two religions; and I fully developed the principle of the Catholic rule of faith, consisting in the belief that there was constituted by God a compact body, or society of teachers, whom He promised always to assist, so as to instruct, through them, till the end of time. The conclusion was, that the Church, or organized society which He had made the depository of His truth, should not be liable to the smallest error.

This Catholic doctrine I propounded to you, and placed in opposition to that principle of faith which constitutes each individual the judge for himself of what he must believe; which, putting the sacred volume of God's inspired word into his hand, tells him, that it is his duty to discover, and, when discovered, to believe, that which may seem there to have been taught. Now, it may be observed, that the truest and best proof of any hypothesis, simply considered as such, is to ascertain that it answers every part of the difficulty which it is intended to meet. For it is with it, as with the solution of a problem, where, if the result answer to all the data or suppositions it contains, and answer so, that on trying one portion by another, all are found to agree together, we are satisfied that the solution is correct. It is only on this principle that the best grounded and most universally

* The Blessed Eucharist.

† Leslie.

adopted theories of philosophy are based; it is on such reasoning as this, that the whole system of the heavens, according to the Newtonian philosophy, can be said to depend. We can have no means of arriving at an intuitive or direct knowledge of the constitution or construction of things; but where we find that laws hypothetically laid, uniformly correspond with all phenomena, and leave nothing vague, but, on the contrary, satisfactorily account for all their parts, such a result is the strongest proof that the system devised accords exactly with the truth of things.

It is on this form of argumentation that I have endeavored to proceed. First of all, I considered the outward form and inward constitution of the Church of Christ to which he confided his religion, as a state foreshown, constituted, and actually existing. As a state foreshown; inasmuch as I explained to you, how God had ever worked in a certain course or order of providence for the preservation of truth among mankind; how a certain provision was made of old, whereby doctrines and hopes revealed to mankind, but lost to most of the world in the corruption which ensued, were preserved; in the constitution of a certain establishment dedicated to that purpose. I showed you that this system was merely figurative of that which was to come; that all the figures, all the imagery and reasoning, and the very phrases which applied to it, were also applied to that which has succeeded it, as though this were to be nothing more than the perfecting and fulfilling thereof. I endeavored, at the same time, to explain how it was the natural order of God's providence, that the course once commenced should go on in a persevering ordinance, until the end: and how, although we might expect a more perfect development, and brighter manifestations, it would be expecting a violation of His plan of action among men, if we anticipated any sudden change, or complete interruption, in that course which He had once commenced.

I then showed you how, of old, there was a clear indication of some future means for the preservation of truth, and that a really efficacious provision; its necessary tendency being to perfect that of the former state, and therefore not merely to remove but to exclude and prevent error. This forms one portion of the data given for constructing our system; and necessarily, whatever is built up as the Church of God, must be such as to fit exactly this basement presented in the old law.

We come, then, to the New Testament: all that can be required to frame this superstructure is there again and again de-

scribed. We find, precisely, forms of expressions used through these descriptions which lead us to construct in our minds a perfectly corresponding system, so as to prove, that what is there established is really the fulfilment of former expectations. The same imagery is preserved, the very promises are made which seem necessary to fulfil what had been foreshown in the figurative dispensation. The harmony which reigned between the two counterparts upon the Catholic system was manifest, for the Catholic interpretation of the passages in the New Testament alone brought them into accordance with those which had before alluded to the provisions therein to be made, and thus formed the only interpretative link between the prophecy and its fulfilment. And this harmony between the two systems gives us a second element towards the resolution of the problem in hand.

Examining, then, more minutely the constitution of this new religion or Church, no longer simply with reference to that which we might expect to find it, but in its own internal and essential constitution as appointed by our blessed Saviour, we analyzed a series of texts; not, I believe, contenting ourselves with vague assertions, but decomposing them, when necessary, into words and phrases, and testing these by other passages on which there could be no doubt. The result was, that Christ did institute a governed society, or body, compactly and completely formed, which has within itself unity, and, composed of all the constitutive elements of a social body, possesses within itself authority and power, and recognises persons appointed for the exercise thereof. We found it, too, empowered and commissioned to collect under its sway the entire human race; and, what is far more worth, in it our blessed Redeemer promised so unfailingly to teach, until the end of time, and so efficaciously to assist, that whatsoever doctrines He had delivered to the apostles and their successors, should endure and be preserved in it until the final dissolution of created things. Here, then, we have several new conditions, or requisites, that must be found in the constitution of Christ's kingdom, or in the form of his Church.

In the next place, we found that there was a promise of a power to diffuse the Gospel; that a charge was given of preaching the truths of Christ to all nations and kingdoms that knew not His name, to all who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. And, therefore, to the Church was given the power or faculty of carrying that commission into execution,—it was to be the chosen instrument of God in spreading the Gospel of Christ over the earth.

In fine, descending into some particulars of its constitution, we examined, last evening, the provision which Christ, in the plenitude of His power, made for the preservation of unity;—by instituting the only means whereby this quality in any social body could be preserved—a centre of unity, a single point towards which all this system might turn; by giving to the whole a firm basis, or foundation, whereon to rest; by appointing an authoritative government to control all its parts.

Such was the constitution of that Church which we had to discover,—such were the data to be verified; and no system can be the true religion of Christ which does not exactly fill up all that I have sketched out, and answer all these conditions;—which does not present a perfect correspondence with every one of these elements of demonstration. Now, I can hardly think it necessary to go into proof to show how every one of these conditions, required in the Church of Christ, we have a right to believe, exist among us. I say, I can hardly think it necessary; because I am sure that any one inclined to be on his guard against the form of argument which I have pursued, and, more particularly, any one who may have been cautioning his mind against being led away by this outline which I have drawn, of what we discovered in the Old Testament and in the Gospels, regarding the constitution of Christ's Church, if he was not at my former discourses, will suspect, that, instead of giving now the picture which we there discovered, I have been only propounding the system of Church government and authority which we maintain. For, it is impossible for any one acquainted with the Catholic doctrines on this head, not to see the exact uniformity and correspondence of parts between it and what I have here thrown together.

If it was foreshown of old, that the Church of Christ was in the form of a kingdom or government—that in the priesthood there was to be authority—that the Church should have such a saving power, such a certainty of decision, as that all its members were to be necessarily taught of God, and that all within its pale were to be peculiarly under his protection; most assuredly it is only the Catholic Church which holds such a system, which professes such a plan of Church government, as can exactly embody all and every one of these images and types. In like manner, if it be said, that in the New Testament we shall find the fulfilment of this figure, by the institution of this authoritative system, it is certain that no Church pretends even to the possession of these rights, or professes to be so constituted, except the Catholic

Church. Again, you can want no farther details, to show that there is a power in this Church to promulgate Christianity; for, I flatter myself, I have sufficiently demonstrated, that, comparatively, or, if I may so speak, absolutely, every attempt made by other religions has proved a failure; that however bright their hopes at first, in every instance, where time has been given for full trial to be made, they have ultimately failed; while, on the other hand, not only in ancient times were Churches founded, which now have an existence requiring no foreign aid, but, since the great secession from the Church, the Gospel has been effectually preached in the east and the west, and religious communities have been established, which have stood the test of long, unwearied persecution, and of abandonment, neglect, and want.

In this manner I endeavored, step by step, to follow the different classes of proofs, and show, by a certain simple and inductive system, how aptly and completely that form of Church government—that groundwork of faith which we hold—combines and comprehends them all. I thus showed you this correspondence of parts from the first announcement to the last institution, from prophecy to its latest fulfilment, as laid down in God's infallible word.

But then, my brethren, we have examined also, although not in the same detail, that antagonist system, if I may so call it, which bases faith on a totally different principle. In my second discourse, I entered fully into the natural and internal difficulties which seemed to embarrass it. I endeavored to show you, that, instead of its proof starting essentially and logically from an admitted principle, and then going gradually forward through propositions successively demonstrated, till it closed in the full development of its principle, or rule of faith, there are breaks and chasms to be leaped over, in order to arrive at the conclusion which had been previously laid down; that there were such innumerable contradictions, difficulties, and impracticable conditions, inherent in its very scheme, as are sufficient to prove it not to be the rule of faith intended by Christ to guide the multitude of mankind unto His truths. But I did not submit it to the same process of reasoning, or the same minute inquiry, as the other. We do not ground our religion, as I have before remarked, on the exclusion of other systems, but on its own essential proofs and arguments; and, therefore, I conceived the true way of proceeding to consist in simply establishing our own faith—demonstrating that it was the only one established by Christ—and thereby leaving you to conclude the impossibility

of any other's standing in competition. But it may have appeared to some, that I have shrunk from discussing, in the same form of argument, the rule of faith proposed by those who think not with us. I therefore propose to try, this evening, how far it will stand the same tests; recapitulating, first, for that purpose, some of the points on which I before touched in its regard.

I remarked that, whereas in the old law we had an express provision made for a written code, yet some of the most important doctrines known to the Jews, and by our Saviour found among them, were not contained in that volume, but handed down by oral tradition. I showed this to be the case with respect to the doctrines of the Trinity, the Word of God incarnate and suffering for the redemption of mankind, and the doctrine of a future state, and of regeneration. These observations tended to show, how strong must be the evidence which alone could establish a teaching by a written code, to the exclusion of divine traditions.

But allow me to ask, where are any of those characteristics which I have already described as exactly preserved in the Catholic system? Where is the constitution of a kingdom to be continued in a visible society of men—visible even as the former was, through external characteristics? Where is the slightest shadow of an institution corresponding to prophecy? of something which may be considered its perfection, by preserving men from error? Where is the security, in the Protestant rule, for the perpetuity of Christ's kingdom, so often clearly foretold in the prophets? For its system supposes, or rather assumes, the possibility of the entire fabric which our Saviour had raised, being reduced to ruins. Thus, if we apply the test of past dispensations, we cannot find their prophecies and symbols fulfilled and realized in the supposed Church of Christ.

But let us see what was the precise appointment made by our Saviour: and here it becomes my duty to examine those passages of the New Testament, on the authority of which it is asserted that the Scripture was to be the rule of faith in the new law—not only so, but its exclusive rule, such as at once necessarily renders not merely useless, but absolutely false, any system that supposes an infallible authority. It must be observed, that the line of argument pursued in supporting the Catholic doctrine on the subject of the rule of faith, is necessarily such as to exclude every other: in other words, that the Catholic interpretation of those texts which establish Church authority and promise the effectual and eternal assistance of the Holy Ghost, and of our

blessed Saviour, therein teaching, necessarily supposes that men are implicitly to learn from that Church, in which alone is a security, on earth, against the possibility of error. You must overthrow all those express declarations and promises, at least, before you can establish the all-sufficiency of Scripture as the rule of faith.

On the other hand, the Catholic system does not in the least exclude the Scriptures; it admits them in their fullest authority. it allows that whatever is therein revealed is necessarily true; it holds that the foundation, or root, of all doctrines is to be virtually discovered in them. Thus, therefore, the Catholic rule cannot be impugned by any text that falls short of a denial of our system: so long as nothing can be alleged to the extent, that Scripture *alone* is the rule to be followed, our arguments in favor of Church authority are not impugned; because, that it is a rule of faith we admit to its fullest extent. But they who hold it as *the only* rule, exclude Church authority; consequently their texts must be so strong in favor of that only rule, as to overthrow all those that have been urged in favor of Church authority, and to compel us in spite of the minute reasoning employed to discover their meaning, to reject them, or render them compatible with the exclusive sufficiency of Scripture.

Now, in order to satisfy myself that I am not overlooking any thing on this head, I have carefully perused treatises by learned Protestant divines on this subject, so the better to see on what grounds they base the doctrine that the written word of God is the only rule of faith. I have been astonished, on opening one, and reading that portion which relates to the all-sufficiency of Scripture as the rule of faith and morals, to find the author, after simply summing up the proofs for its inspiration, proceed to say, that it contains a full knowledge of all that is necessary for man, because it teaches the unity of God in Trinity, and that Christ came on earth and died for mankind, and likewise instructs us on the way of repentance, a future state, and the resurrection of the dead: and conclude, that, therefore, Scripture was the sufficient and only rule of faith and morals.* Now, I would ask, what is the connection between the consequence and its proof? The Scripture teaches all these doctrines, therefore there is no other doctrine necessary to be learnt. This is the very question under discussion, and is assumed without proof—a form of argument which I have often had occasion to deprecate.

* Horne's Introduction, vol. i. p. 490, sixth edition.

For, this reasoning takes for-granted that those given doctrines which are laid down explicitly in Scripture are all that need be known, and this forms precisely the great difference between us.* There is in it, too, a savor of strong presumption: because it first of all pretends to settle what measure of faith God might exact, and so decide that the chosen measure, that is, what is clearly found in Scripture, must be sufficient. Now, God is master of his own institutions, and may have deemed it fitting to put the humility and faith of his people to the trial of submission, and may have chosen points of apparently minor importance for the subject of his trial; nor can we lay down, from any reasoning of our own, what are sufficient truths for salvation. We must be content to take the system as it has been framed by God, not as it might appear to suit our ideas of propriety.

The question, then, being in its nature one of arbitrary institution, is one exclusively of positive proof: and I would ask any sober and serious Protestant, if he can possibly consider such argumentation as this a sufficient ground to satisfy himself that God appointed the Scripture, the New Testament, in the first place, to be written, and, secondly, to be read by all men: and thirdly, that he pledged himself that, in spite of the errors and frailties of the human mind, all men should be able to arrive at truth by its means. Unless he can be satisfied that, in reasoning such as I have stated, all these propositions are included and demonstrated,—unless he is satisfied that they are so included and demonstrated, as at once to overthrow the conclusion naturally and obviously drawn from other parts of Scripture, wherein our Saviour appoints a Church to teach to the end of time, with a supernatural assistance, assuredly he must allow that this reasoning is not only superficial, but highly deceitful. The Catholic

* The reduction of this argument to logical forms will at once show its weakness and insufficiency. Mr. Horne's *thesis* or proposition, is that Scripture alone contains all that is necessary for faith, and his argument reduced to syllogism is this. "The Scripture contains the doctrines of the Trinity, repentance, &c.: now these are all the doctrines necessary for faith; therefore, the Scripture contains all such doctrines." Who does not see that the second, or *minor* proposition, contains the entire question between us, yet of this no proof is brought, but it is assumed. And, doubtless, if any one asked the propounder of such an argument on what grounds he proved these doctrines sufficient for salvation, his answer *must* be, "because they alone are clearly laid down in Scripture." I say *must* be, because his principle prevents his allowing any doctrines on any other ground. But then such an answer at once shows that the entire argument moves in a vicious circle. 1. "The Scripture is all-sufficient because it contains all doctrines necessary to be believed." 2. "The doctrines so assumed are all that are necessary to be believed, because they alone are to be found in Scripture."

Church, on the contrary, places the ground of faith, and the rule which is to guide men to truth, manifestly on a firm, fair, and logical basis.

But there are texts of Scripture, often quoted for the purpose of demonstrating that the New Testament is the rule of faith. Our Saviour, for instance, says to the Jews,—“Search the Scriptures, and the same are they that give testimony of me.”*

1. Surely, my brethren, these words, when compared with their use upon another occasion, must tend to show, upon how many accidental circumstances the use of this rule depends, and how uncertain it must be in its application. “Search the Scriptures,” exclaims our Saviour to the Jews, “and the same are they that give testimony of me.”—“Search the Scriptures,” triumphantly cry the priests and Pharisees to Nicodemus, “and see that out of Galilee a prophet riseth not.”† The one justly calls upon the impartial and docile to look into the sacred volume for evidence of his being the true Messiah; the other appeals to the very same book, for a demonstration that his claims are ungrounded. Is not this a case of daily occurrence? Do not the impugnors of our Lord’s divinity maintain that it is rejected in the same Scripture, wherein others see it so clearly defined? And must not the vagueness of a rule, the right use whereof so much depends on the mind of him who applies it, make it little qualified to form the sole guidance of a darkened and bewildered understanding?

2. But farther, my brethren, I cannot avoid being struck with a portion of the sentence not often quoted. Christ says: “Search the Scriptures, for in them *ye think* that ye have eternal life.” These words sound to me like any thing but approbation of the principle. I would almost venture to assert, that, throughout the gospels, the verb here used, when applied out of a question,‡ is only expressive of an ungrounded opinion; in other words, that wherever any doctrine or proposition is referred to the *opinions* or *thinkings* of any one, the expression implies disapprobation. For instance:—“And when you are praying, speak not much as the heathens. For *they think* that in their much speaking they may be heard.”§ “Whosoever hath not, that also which *he thinketh* he hath shall be taken away from him.”||

* Jo. v. 39.

† Jo. vii. 52. Such is the reading of the Vulgate and of many MSS.

‡ As “who *think ye* will this child be?” Luke i. 66, &c. In such passages no particular opinion is referred to.

§ Matt. vi. 7.

|| Luke viii. 18.

‘But Jesus spoke of his death; and *they thought* that he spoke of the repose of sleep.’* But, on the other hand, when our Saviour, or the evangelists, wish to mark the correctness of the opinion, they use the verb *to know*. Thus:—“*Ye know* that the princes of the Gentiles lord it over them.”† “When the branch is tender, and the leaves come forth, *ye know* that the summer is nigh.”‡ “*Ye know*, that after two days shall be the pasch.”§ “Rebuking them, he suffered them not to speak, for *they knew* that he was Christ.”|| “*Ye know* whence I am.”¶ This invariable consistency of expression, when the opinion is approved or disapproved, seems to me to leave not the slightest doubt that our Redeemer did not approve of that almost superstitious feeling of the Jews, renewed in our times, that the possession of the word of God alone is sufficient to save. “In them *ye think* that ye have everlasting life!” Our Lord thus appeals to the Scriptures, simply as to an admitted ground, by an argument *ad hominem*, as the schools term it; that is, he even takes advantage of the excessive confidence which the Jews placed in their possession of an inspired work, and appeals to that very feeling to form the groundwork of his evidences.

3. But, after all, I would ask, what were the Scriptures, which the Jews are told to search? Were they the Old or the New Testament? Assuredly not the New, for it was not then written. Can you from such a command conclude, that because the Jews, who, as I have allowed from the beginning, had a written code, and for whom measures were taken originally and fundamentally, that they should have a written code, were referred to it, another Scripture, which did not then exist, was constituted the infallible and sole rule of faith? We cannot suppose that our Saviour would do any thing so strange, if I may so term it, as to refer them to a work then not even written; neither could they understand by his words any thing but the Old law. So that the command which he gave to the Jews, to search their own Scripture to find a testimony of him, is stretched so as to include other Scriptures thereafter to be written; or else it is maintained, on a ground of parallelism for which no proof is brought, that, in the same manner as these Jews were referred to some Scripture, so each and every Christian is obliged to search others, and therein find the truth!

4. Not only so, but the argument, to have any weight, must

* Jo. xii. 13, compare Luke vii. 51, xiii. 2, 4, &c.

† Matt. xx. 25, comp. Mar. x. 42.

‡ Ib. xxvi. 2.

§ U. l. iv. 41.

¶ Ib. xxiv. 82.

¶ Jo. vii. 23.

be still more strongly distorted. For, because the Jews were told to search the *Old Testament* for the discovery of *one* specific truth, it is concluded that Christians must search the *New*, and will in it find *all* truth. Suppose, now, that we were speaking on any particular point of law, such as the treatment of the poor, and I were to say, "Search the statute-book, it will give you testimony or information regarding it:" would any reasonable man conclude, that I thereby meant to assert, that the entire law on every other subject, as on real property, was equally to be found specifically laid down in that volume? So here, when Jesus tells the Jews, that the Old Testament gives witness of his divine mission, who will not deem it unreasonable to infer, that another part of Scripture, not then existing, should contain the full development of his religion and law. For mind, he does not say that the Scriptures are *sufficient* to salvation,—that they contain the whole truth,—but only that they bear testimony of him; and on this one point the Scripture will truly give satisfactory demonstration.

The second, and the strongest text, is precisely of the same character. It is from the second epistle of Paul to Timothy.* "But continue thou in those things which thou hast learned, and which have been committed to thee, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and because, from thy infancy thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which can instruct thee unto salvation by the faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture inspired by God is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice, that the man of God may be perfect, furnished unto every good work." From this text, again, it is inferred, that Scripture, or the written word of God in the New Testament, contains within it all that is necessary unto salvation through faith; and that men are required consequently to adopt it as their only rule.

1. Here, again, the same question presents itself,—what are the Scriptures of which St. Paul speaks? Of those Scriptures which Timothy has known from his infancy; consequently not the Books of the New Testament; for even here not a word is uttered about a written code for the new law—not a word about books to be compiled for the instruction of men in the doctrines of Christianity.

2. In the second place, what was to be learned from these books, **that is**, those of the old law?—and for what purpose was Timo-

* 2 Timothy iii. 14.

thy to use them? The object is evidently the same as in the former case of the Jews. These Scriptures are able to instruct or make men "wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus;" that is to say, through the evidences they gave, Timothy had been brought to the faith of Christ: so that the knowledge of the Scriptures here spoken of seems only preparatory to coming into Christianity.

3. In the next place, what is the utmost said concerning them? Is it asserted that they are *sufficient* to make men perfect in faith? Are we even assured that they are *sufficient* for teaching, for reproof, and for instruction, or not rather that they are *profitable* and useful? And does not the Catholic say precisely the same? Do not we teach, that the Scripture is most profitable, most useful, and most conducive to every thing good? that it should be studied and practised as the guide and rule of our lives? But is there not a wide difference between asserting a book to be *profitable* for these purposes, and considering it exclusively sufficient? Even if that sufficiency had been stated, it would not have embraced the faith of Christ, seeing it only referred to the Old Testament.

4. Again, it is manifest that St. Paul, when here speaking of the Scriptures, does not teach that they should be individually read and used by all the faithful, but speaks only of their use for the pastors of the Church. For observe, that the purposes for which he pronounces Scripture profitable, are exclusively the functions of the ministry, and not those of the hearers, and learners, and subjects of the Church of Christ. He says, "it is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Timothy is warned to hold fast the doctrines which St. Paul had taught him, first knowing of whom he had learnt them, that is, on the authority of the apostles. The second ground suggested is, that of the Old Testament bearing testimony to the faith of Christ. Then he is told to remember, besides, that this Scripture is profitable for the work of the ministry, for correcting, reproof, and instructing. These are manifestly all heads, not of individual conviction, but essentially appertaining to the ministry, or priesthood; and if any thing can thence be deduced regarding the use of the Scripture, it can only be that pastors should be familiar with them, and know how to use them for the edification of their flocks.

5. But, for what end is Scripture to be so used? Is it for the building up of a complete system of faith even in the minister of God? Most certainly not; the profitableness of God's word

is simply that by the teaching, the reproving, and correcting, thence drawn, "the man of God may be perfect, *furnished to every good work.*" Whether, therefore, by the man of God you understand each Christian, or, with greater probability, the minister of God,* it is the fulfilment by him of the moral law, not the construction of systematic faith, which has to be attained by the profitable use of the Bible. Surely these multiplied considerations are sufficient to disprove the application made of this passage, to show that Scripture exclusively is a rule of faith, and that for every individual. Then, too, contrast with it the proofs which I drew from the very epistles of St. Paul to Timothy, in favor of traditional teaching;† throw them into balance with the considerations which I have proposed, and then see what weight will be found in the naked words of this text, and the unproved consequences which are from it drawn.

An argument is sometimes drawn from another passage. In the Acts of the Apostles, where we read: "These (*the Bereans*) were more noble than those of Thessalonica, *in that* they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scripture daily, whether those things were so."‡ Such is the authorized Anglican version of the text; and we are triumphantly asked, is not this a clear approbation of the Protestant method, of personally investigating, through Scripture, the doctrines taught.

1. But, first, I must protest against the accuracy of the translation. In the original text, as well as in the most ancient versions, it is simply written, "they were nobler (or better disposed) *who* received the word," &c.§ Their being more noble is not proved, as the English version intimates, by their searching the Scriptures.

2. The Scriptures here alluded to are, once more, only those of the Old Testament.

3. These Bereans are supposed to be commended for search-

* This term "man of God" is only used in one other place in the New Testament, and then it is addressed by St. Paul to Timothy himself: "but thou, O man of God, fly these things." 1 Tim. vi. 11. This consideration makes it probable, that "the man of God" of the second epistle is Timothy individually, and then the passage will still less bear the extended interpretation given to it by Protestants. But should it be deemed necessary to extend the meaning of the phrase, we must go to the Old Testament for its explanation, where "a man of God" is invariably one sent by God as his special minister, prophet, or commissioner. Consult Deut. xxxiii. 1; Jos. xiv. 6; 1 Kings (Sam.) ix. 7, 8; 4 (1) Kings i. 9-13; iv. 7-27; 2 Chron. viii. 14* xi. 2, &c.

† See Lecture v. pp. 112-114.

‡ Acts xvii. 11.

§ *Οἱ βερεαι* is the word translated by "in that." In the Vulgate, *qui*, "who;" in the venerable Syrian version it is, "*and they heard the word.*"

ing in the Scriptures—to verify *whose* doctrines? Why, the very apostles! the very writers of the New Testament! Will any one push the principle of Bible investigation to this point—to say that not even the word of an inspired apostle was to be received, but was to be subjected to the private scrutiny of every ordinary Christian layman? Surely not: what then are we to understand by this passage? Clearly that persons *not yet* Christians, like the Jews of Berœa, and not convinced of the divine mission of those who preach to them, have a right, nay a duty, of investigating the evidence which they bring. The apostles, speaking to Jews, naturally appealed to the prophecies of the Old Testament, as the simplest and strongest evidence of the truth which they proclaimed. Their hearers naturally and most justly verified their quotations, and satisfied themselves of their correct application. But surely, when once convinced by these means, that those who addressed them were sent by God, this task was at an end; and nothing more remained, but that they should with docility attend to their teaching.

These are literally the only texts of Scripture brought forward, with any plausibility whatever, in favor of the word of God's being, in the new covenant, the exclusive ground of faith; and I will put it to any impartial mind, if these texts, after the reflections I have made on them, contrasted with the power given to the Church to teach, and the divine sanction permanently promised to her, are of sufficient strength to overthrow the authority on which the Catholic religion bases its rule of faith, as demonstrated by so many and such concurrent testimonies? So far, then, we have conducted our inquiry to this point—to the establishment of a system of faith, such as the Catholic Church supposes, and to the exclusion of that which expects from each one the formation of a particular code of religion, extracted from the written word of God. We have, in other words, come to the conclusion that Christ appointed a Church, with full authority to teach, and with a full guarantee from himself, that it should not fall into error.

But a question immediately presents itself. Upon what grounds does the Catholic Church arrogate to itself to be this one Church? Why should not these prerogatives reside in the Church of England? Has not it also a claim to this authority? Why not in the Greek Church, or in various other oriental Churches? Why not in the collection of all Churches together? This is the subject to which I now proceed, and I must be content to discuss it in a very compendious manner. Last Wednes-

day. I spoke at length on what is considered by us the supreme authority of God's Church, and I necessarily went into some remarks on the constant and uninterrupted succession of pastors in our Church. On a former occasion, I showed you, likewise, (and I quoted the authority of a learned divine of the Church of England to prove it acknowledged,) that, even up to a late period, the Catholic Church was, as we believe it now, essentially the true Church of Christ,—that it was impossible to fix the period when it lost that title, other than about the time of the Reformation,—that is, at the celebration of the Council of Trent. Others, however, put the period of its supposed defection much farther back. But, at present, this matters not: for both parties concede the important fact, that we have prior existence; for both consider us as essentially connected with the foregoing and well-entitled state of the Church of Christ; and the only question is, *when* we lost our right to that title. They grant, what nobody can deny, that, so far as external connection goes, the series of bishops is uninterrupted in the Catholic Church. We can name, without a doubt of any moment, the exact order of succession, and the term of reign enjoyed by each Pontiff, in the Roman See. And in many churches of Italy, France, Spain, and Germany, we can show a succession of bishops, from him who first held the See, to the present day. Now, therefore, it requires authoritative argument to drive any one from the possession of that which he has preserved by uninterrupted links. It requires very strong proofs on the other side, to show how we have forfeited the title which we had in the beginning, to be considered the only legitimate and undisputed possessors of these Sees; or, in other words, the representatives of the Church of Christ: for it is admitted, that, when these Sees were founded, they formed the Church of Christ. Their bishops have remained in them to this moment, and they must be proved to have fallen away, and to have lost their right as the successors of that Church, which is acknowledged by all to have been originally perfect in its doctrines. If we seek a counterpart in the Greeks and their Church, we find a manifest connection and communion with us up to a certain time; they then, by a formal act, throw off their allegiance and erect themselves into an independent communion; and, while all this happens, we move not, we remain in the same position in which we were before they left us. By that act did they acquire new claims, or did we forfeit those which we had before? Coming down to a later period, it is acknowledged that the Church of England separated from that

of Rome; various reasons have been brought to prove that the separation was lawful, and to justify the grounds on which it took place. There is, consequently, an acknowledgment that a change of state occurred in her, while we remain still in possession of whatever rights we previously held; and strong positive arguments must be brought to prove that we are not still what we are previously acknowledged to have been—the Church of Christ. We cannot be called upon to prove that we are to be reckoned still the same. We stand upon our rights, as the successor to a dynasty claims the crowns of his ancestors, or as any nobleman in this country holds the lands legally given to his forefathers, from whom he inherits. Whatever branches of the family may have separated from it, or may have accepted other titles or properties, that cannot affect the right line of succession which he represents.

But, without entering farther into the development of this argument, which would lead us into many secondary considerations, I am content to take the question upon common grounds. We are all agreed—at least the great majority of Christians in this country—in the acceptance of a common symbol of faith or creed; and profess in it their belief in One Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.* I willingly stand upon this admitted principle. It would be exceedingly long, and in some respects invidious, to enter into a comparison of the respective claims of the Catholic, and of other Churches, to these qualifications; but there is one simple way of demonstrating which has the right to them; by showing, that is, which alone claims them. For, if we find that all others give up their right and title to these distinctives, it follows that they can have no pretensions to them; and if only one assumes them as its characteristics, assuredly we have enough to prove that it alone possesses them.

1. With regard to *unity*, all say that they believe in one Church, and profess that the true Church can be only one. But the Catholic Church is the only one that requires absolute unity of faith among all its members; not only so, but—as by principles alone I wish to try the question—the Catholic Church is the only one that holds a principle of faith essentially supposing unity as the most necessary quality of the Church. The Catholic Church lays down, as its principle and ground of faith, that all mankind must believe whatever she decides, and sanctions, with the assistance of the Holy Ghost; and this is a principle necessarily di-

* The Nicene Creed.

rected to bring all men's minds into oneness of thought. Its essence, therefore, its very soul, that which gives it individuality, is the principle of unity. The principle of the others is, that each individual must judge for himself, and make out his own system of faith; now dispersion, dissension, and variety, are necessarily the very essence of a Church which adopts that principle. And this, in fact, is practically demonstrated. For Leslie acknowledges, that the character, nature, and principle of private judgment is to produce variety, and difference of opinion, and even civil and general war. Thus, clearly, in the Catholic Church alone does the principle of *unity* exist.

But what shall I say of the character of *holiness*? Shall I enter into a comparison of the doctrines of the two religions, to show which is the most conducive to that attribute; or shall I compare the lives of most eminent men in our respective Churches? This is a contrast which has been often made, and may be easily repeated; and I have no hesitation in saying, that, avoiding reference to the present day, and selecting the leading characters, who in former ages have been distinguished as the public representatives of the two systems of belief, it has been made not certainly to our disadvantage, but, on the contrary, with a complete triumph in our favor. But I do not wish to enter upon this topic, as it would lead us into great details, and some, perhaps, of an unpleasant nature. Once more, therefore, I stand upon the principle. Our principle is, that the Church, as a Church, can never be immersed in vice, in wickedness, or idolatry, that she never can be but what St. Paul describes, when he speaks of her as the spouse of the Lamb, as a chaste virgin, without spot or wrinkle.* The Catholic Church maintains that, by the teaching of Christ, and the promised protection of the Holy Ghost, she is preserved essentially and necessarily from falling into a state of error, corruption, or vice. The principle of Protestantism not only supposes the contrary, but cannot be justified without it. It is only on the ground that the Church has not been always holy, that she has been, and, consequently, can be, plunged into the most disgraceful idolatry and wickedness,—it is only on this ground that Protestants can pretend to justify their separation, and the formation of a new religious system. Therefore, the Catholic principle supposes a provision for the maintenance of unfailing holiness in the Church, as one

* 2 Cor. xi. 2. Ephes. v. 27.

of its essential qualities; the Protestant assumes the destruction of that holiness as the ground of its justification.

The third characteristic is *Catholicity*. And here, indeed, we have the advantage of the name itself. It may be said that a name or designation is nothing—that we only arrogate it to ourselves, and have no right to it; and, consequently, that we are only grounding our claims on usurpation, when we consider ourselves the Catholic Church, because we have that name. Now, it is very remarkable, how, in the Church of old, this title was prized and valued; and how the Fathers, when proving that the Catholic is the true Church, observe that her adversaries wished to deprive her of that title, but never could succeed. They disputed her right to it, and yet were obliged to give it her. In like manner, whoever considers the present state of things, must acknowledge, that it would be as impossible to root out any established form of speech, as to make men cease calling us Catholics. They have added the word “Roman” to our title; but still, the “Catholic” cannot be separated from our name. At the same time, no other Church has succeeded in getting that title for itself. In several late works, we may notice the attempt to speak of the English Church as “the Catholic Church;” but such a phrase can only lead readers into error, or leave them in perplexity. To show the strength of this position, I will read you a few extracts from the Fathers of the Church; and you will hear how clearly they speak.

In the first century, it is said of St. Polycarp, that he used constantly to offer up prayers for the members “of the whole Catholic Church diffused throughout the world.”* I mention this, merely to show, how early the name was assumed in the Church of Christ, although it was not then so extended as in later times. Three centuries after, St. Cyril, one of the most learned Doctors of the Greek Church, and Patriarch of Jerusalem, telling a person who had been converted to the Catholic Church, to persevere and keep out of the conventicles of other religions, says:—“Should you come into a city, do not inquire merely for the house of God, for so heretics call their places of meeting; nor yet ask merely for the church; but say, the *Catholic* church—for this is the proper name.”†

St. Pacianus, a Father of the Latin Church, uses precisely the same argument:—“In the time of the apostles, you will say, no one was called *Catholic*. Be it so: but when heresies afterwards

* Euseb. H. E. Lib. iv. c. xv.

† Catech. xviii. n. xxv. p. 729.

began, and, under different names, attempts were made to disfigure and divide our holy religion, did not the apostolic people require a name, whereby to mark their unity; a proper appellation to distinguish the head? Accidentally entering a populous city, where are Marcionites, Novatians, and others who call themselves Christians, how shall I discover where my own people meet, unless they be called *Catholics*? I may not know the origin of the name; but what has not failed through so long a time, came not surely from any individual man. It has nothing to say to Marcion, nor Appelles, nor Montanus. No heretic is its author. Is the authority of apostolic men, of the blessed Cyprian, of so many aged bishops, so many martyrs and confessors, of little weight? Were not they of sufficient consequence to establish an appellation which they always used? Be not angry, my brother: *Christian is my name, Catholic is my surname.*"*

In the same century, St. Epiphanius, a writer of the Greek Church, tells us that, at Alexandria, those schismatics who adhered to Meletius, called their Church "the Church of the Martyrs," while the rest retained for theirs the name of "the Catholic Church."† But another, and still more striking passage, is in St. Augustine. He says,—“It is our duty to hold to the Christian religion, and *the communion of that Church which is Catholic, and is so called, not by us only, but by all its adversaries.* For, whether they be so disposed or not, in conversing with others, they must use the word Catholic, or they will not be understood.”‡ Again: “Among the many considerations that bind me to the Church, is the name of *Catholic*, which, not without reason, in the midst of so many heresies, *this Church alone has so retained*, that although all heresies wish to acquire the name, should a stranger ask where the Catholics assemble, the heretics themselves will not dare to point out any of their own places of meeting.”§

These examples suffice to show the force of that name; they prove how precious the ancient Christians guarded it, as we do; how others endeavored to wrest it from them; and how they contrasted it with those names which the others took. They remark how some were called Marcionites, others Donatists, or Nestorians; but none ever dared to take the appellation of Catholic; so that if one asked, even then, which was the Catholic chapel or church, they did not presume to direct him to any but

* Ep. I. ad Sympronian. Bib. PP. Max. T. iv. p. 306.

† Hæres. Tom. i. p. 719.

‡ De vera Religione, c. vii. T. i. p. 752.

§ Contra Ep. Fanian. c. iv. tom. viii. p. 153.

that of the true Catholics. Thus, as I have observed, the very title itself seems to give us claims to this characteristic; yet, not merely have we the title, but the thing itself. For our idea of the Church is that of its being a society or government constituted by Christ, with full dominion over the whole of the earth; so that men, whatever country they inhabit, may be brought into connection with, and attach themselves to it; and its endeavors to verify its name, by the extension of Christianity and Catholicity over the world, have been successful. But every other Church confined within its own state, every Church constituted according to a peculiar confession of faith, which its members have voluntarily defined, every such Church excludes necessarily that extension of dominion, that universality of communion, which is designated by the name of Catholic.

Once more, who are *Apostolical*? Is it meant by this term, that the doctrines taught in the Church are those of the apostles? Most certainly not. That the apostolic doctrines will be taught in the Church of Christ is certain; but that the teaching of true doctrines is the definition of apostolicity, is manifestly erroneous. For apostolicity of doctrine is identical with truth in doctrine: and the discovery of one is the discovery of the other. One cannot be a means for finding out the other. It, consequently, must consist in some outward mark, which may lead to the discovery of where the apostolical doctrines are. It is in the apostolic succession that this principle resides—in having the line of descent distinctly traced from the present holder of the apostolical See, through those who preceded him, to the blessed Peter, who first sat therein. This is what was meant of old by the apostolic Church; and this is the sense in which the Fathers applied the mark. I satisfied you, in my last discourse, how Eusebius, St. Optatus, St. Irenæus, and others, proved their faith to be the true one, by showing that they were in communion with the Church of Rome, and could trace their pedigree, through it, from the apostles. Thus did they understand apostolicity to be given as an outward mark, in the continued and unaltered succession from the time of the apostles. Here, again, although the matter is manifest, I do not wish to take it as one of fact, but to establish it on principle. We are the only Church which claims this succession; others do not; at least, the only way they can, is by tracing their episcopal line back to the time when they separated from us, and then claim as their's that succession which forms the chain of our uninterrupted hierarchy. Such a course is at once oblique, and goes not directly to the

root. They wish to be engrafted on us, rather than pretend to any root in the earth itself. Yet the Catholic Church considers them as separatists from it, and, consequently, they have no right to the succession which rests on her line.

In this manner, adopting those lights which creeds or symbols of faith can give us, we come to this important conclusion—that, on principle, the Catholic Church alone maintains possession of these characteristics, usually considered as the *marks* or *notes* of the Church; that the rule of faith of other Churches, so far from supposing these to be in their possession, entirely excludes them, and allows them not to be held as ground of adhesion to themselves. And, putting the question upon an obvious, practical ground, I much doubt whether a preacher or clergyman of any Church but ours ever thought of exhorting his congregation to hold and prize their religion, or consider it exclusively true, on the grounds of its being manifestly *one, Catholic, or apostolical*.*

A word, my brethren, which I have just used, brings me to another very important topic, connected with our present subject: I mean that doctrine which is known by the almost odious appellation of *exclusive salvation*. This is considered the harshest, the most intolerable point of the Catholic creed, touching its rule of faith; that we hold ourselves so exclusively in possession of God's truth, as to consider all others essentially in error, and not to allow that, through their belief, salvation is to be obtained.

Upon this matter allow me to observe, in the first place, that

* There is a striking contrast between the religion of the first ages and those sects which have sprung up in modern times, in the names wherein they respectively gloried. The former boasted of the name of *Catholics*, the latter have chosen a name expressive of *uncatholicity*; for to be called *Protestants*, or *protestors* against any other religion, is at least an admission of a rival, and, I may say, of a stronger, power. It is a name of separation, of antagonism, of dissent: it supposes struggle and warfare, so long as the name shall last—a creed built on rejection, and formed of negations, rather than a consistent and well-ordered system of belief. Again, they of old loved to be called *Apostolic*; the moderns prefer being named *Evangelical*. The former term seizes at once the great and visible demonstration of the faith, it carries the mind to the fundamental evidences of Christianity, it guides the thought along an unbroken succession of links from the latest time to the original reservoirs of incorruptible truth; the latter shows that the dead letter of the word, variously divined and understood, is the text of religious code; in other words, that the little light of individual capacity, as it is poured over its pages or successive lines, forms the guidance of each precious soul on the perilous and mysterious path of salvation! Which name seems most in accordance with the merciful ways of Providence on behalf of man? which places the evidences of his truth on the firmer basis? And does not the contrast of names, as indicative of a contrast of principles, stand well as now, if, for the *ancient Church*, we substitute the *Catholic*?

you will find it difficult to analyze, to its extreme consequences, the principle of any Church professing to have a code or rule of faith, without finding yourselves led to the implicit maintenance of some such doctrine as this. When a Church draws up a confession of faith, and commands all to sign and submit to it, and proclaims that eternal punishment will reach all who refuse, assuredly it supposes that the teaching of such doctrines is essentially necessary to salvation. If not, what constitutes the necessity of doctrine in reference to the revelation from God? Our Saviour comes down from heaven, on purpose to teach mankind; does he propose his doctrines under a penalty or not? Does he say, you may receive or reject these, as you please? If not, is there not something incurred by refusing to accept them? Is there not the displeasure and indignation of God? Consequently, a penalty is necessarily affixed to the refusal of those obligations which Christ considered essential to faith. And the Church proceeds upon the principle, that these doctrines are so essential, that a violation of God's precepts and laws is involved in the rejection of them, and makes every one who culpably—mind, *culpably*—rejects, and does not believe them, guilty of refusing what Christ died to accomplish and propose. “He that believeth not shall be condemned.”* This is the necessary consequence to which every formulary of faith leads; it is essential to the existence of every confession, unless a different view be expressly and definitively given.

Looking, for instance, at the formulary of the Church of England, contained in the Athanasian creed, and appointed to be read in Churches, I would ask if it be possible, for any man of common understanding, to read its commencement and conclusion, and not be satisfied that its meaning is, that whoever does not believe the dogmas contained in it, is out of the way of salvation? If that Church still compels its ministers publicly to read it, does it not thereby imply the necessity of teaching their flocks that the rejection of certain doctrines will exclude men from eternal life? and what is this but exclusive salvation? It matters not whether the distinction be wide or narrow; it matters not whether the exacted dogma be, the belief in a Trinity, in undivided Unity, or in justification in one form or the other; the principle is the same, whether it act in one degree or two. It is, therefore, most unjust to condemn the Catholic Church for holding only the same doctrine as is taught by others. And yet w

*Mark xvi. 1

are perpetually taunted by this very Church, which puts so prominently forward, in one of the 39 Articles, the doctrine, that "they also are to be had accursed, that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law," &c.* I have, so lately as yesterday, had a published letter put into my hands, addressed by a zealous clergyman of the Church of England, and one who has been exceedingly conspicuous in deprecating the doctrines of our religion, to a Catholic priest. He writes that he feels an anxious interest in his salvation, because he believes the doctrines of Catholicity to be fatal to his eternal welfare. He tells him that a continuance in them will involve the loss of his soul.† And what is this, but the doctrine of exclusive salvation?

Think not that we presume to pass sentence upon any individual, or pretend to pry into the secrets of the heart. God knows, my brethren, that, instead of brooding with gloomy delight over the dark and fearful statutes of His justice, we bow down in humiliation and sorrow before the awful cloud which envelops His mysterious judgment-seat. God knows, that, instead of seeking to straiten the resources of His mercy and compassion, and assuming the right of judging another's servant, we rejoice to dwell upon their varied and ingenious workings, and to trust that, while with Elias we pray for the enlargement of His inheritance, He may reprove us as he did the prophet, by assuring us, that even in the separated tribes he has reserved a host of sincere inquirers and conscientious observers, who have not knowingly bent the knee to error. He, in fine, knows that, if we have to reproach ourselves with any departure from his word on this point, it is, that we soften the severity of expressions, and too frequently cloak under soothing phrases, and often delusive hopes, the clear and uncompromising denunciations of punishment which it utters against those who do not hold all its doctrines. Surely we shall not be judged of uncharitableness, if the conduct of the meek and compassionate Jesus is to be the standard of fraternal love, and the model of his ministers. For the very gospel of this day affords us an important lesson on this subject.

Never, my brethren, were men more slightly separated from the acknowledged truth, than were the Samaritans in His time.

* Art. xviii.

† Letter by the Rev. Mr. Dalton to the Hon. and Rev. G. Spencer. I could give sufficient examples from other modern Protestants.

Besides the Jews, they were, perhaps, the only nation upon the earth that believed and adored one God as a spiritual and perfect Being; and, as appears from St. John, they alone, like the Jews, expected a Redeemer and Messiah.* Not one grossly erroneous tenet of faith or morals can be substantiated against them; they, perhaps, only erred in not admitting *all* the sacred books of the Jews as canonical; a difference which modern liberality would not dare to condemn as wounding the essentials of religion. In fact, their only crime was sensism in its most mitigated form: they had a rival temple, yet even in this, their priesthood was derived in unbroken succession from Aaron, and their worship was in strict conformity to the Mosaic institutions. In addition to these extenuating circumstances, there was much in their character to plead strongly in their favor. Their hospitality was so remarkable, that a Roman emperor erected a statue in their city to the hospitable Jupiter, in conformity, says an ancient historian, with the genius of the nation. Their charity was so superior, that our Saviour chose it as the model proposed in the most beautiful of His parables. Their docility was such, that, though in a state of rivalry and jealousy with the Jews, He made, in two short days, a considerable number of disciples among them. In a word, so prepared were they for the sublime truths of the Gospel, that, with a docility not equalled among their neighbors, they instantly yielded to it on the preaching of Philip, and with such unanimity, that it could be said, that, in consequence, "there was much joy in that city."†

It was with a woman of this nation that Jesus held a most interesting conference, at the well of Jacob: and, though her life had evidently been far from regular. He accosted her with that winning affability which ever distinguished His deportment. He concealed His real character, but she soon discovered Him to be a prophet; and accordingly appealed to Him, in the words of my text, on the great question of the religious differences between the two nations. My friends, what was his answer? Her very appeal to a *Jewish* prophet showed that she was sincere and confident in her persuasion; did Jesus fear to unsettle her belief, and therefore, by evasion, soothe her in her false reliance? She argues upon the most specious and most common palliative of error. "Our fathers," says she, "adored upon this mountain:"‡ does He dread to wound her feelings, or to shock the prejudices of her education? No, my brethren. Slight as were the dissenting

* Chap. iv. 25.

† Acts viii. 9.

‡ John iv. 20.

principles of these sectarians, amiable and charitable as may have been their characters, ripe as they were for Christianity, affable and conciliating as the interview had hitherto been, no sooner is this important question put, than He makes no allowance, no compromise, but answers clearly and solemnly, "*Salvation is of the Jews!*"* The woman flies to the usual subterfuge of delay; she hints at the difficulty of decision, and puts off the inquiry till a more favorable opportunity, when she may have the advantage of the Messiah's determination. But, that she might have no farther plea for her errors, and, above all, that the principle which He had just formally laid down might want no sanction, He instantly throws off his disguise, and stands revealed: "I am He who am speaking with thee."† Thus did this benign and charitable Saviour, who came to seek and save what was lost, and whose first principle it was, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," thus did He hesitate not a moment to pronounce, in the clearest terms, that no deviation from the true religion, however trivial, can be justified or excused in His sight.

But, on this subject, I trust, I have said enough; it only remains that I draw some conclusions from the short course which I have finished this evening; and they will be addressed to you in the form of simple exhortation and unaffected counsel.

In the first place, I would beg of all, who have the true interests of religion at heart, to put themselves exceedingly on their guard against the various methods constantly pursued, to prejudice their minds against our doctrines. For many years, the Catholic religion in this country was an object of persecution, by slowly, but effectually, acting laws, tending to paralyze its energies, rather than completely deprive it of life. That period is now past, and I trust, that the remembrance of it, as far as any feeling of resentment is concerned, (indeed, it should be remembered in no way but to thank God for His mercies,) is as completely blotted out from the hearts of Catholics, as those statutes themselves are from the code of England. But unfortunately, since, another method of attack has been pursued, more open, more clamorous, more directed to wound our feelings; and not only so, but much more calculated to ruin the cause of all religion. I allude to that system of violent declamation and invective against us, in which so many, who call themselves ministers of peace, indulge throughout this country. It has been even the custom to send round men from town to town; and were

* John iv. 22.

† Ibid. 23.

it for no other purpose than merely to preach their own doctrines in their own places of worship, we could not complain; not even if they went so far as to warn their hearers against what they conceived to be erroneous in us. But to make religion a matter of public declamation—to collect crowds of men in places usually appropriated to profane purposes, and to think it a most important duty to break, if possible, in sunder, the bonds of social community, of affection and kindness, which exist among members of different religions, must be blighting to the holiest virtues, and consequently to the interests of all Christianity. It is by the general feeling of society being declared against such a system, that it can best be checked and prevented. Whoever feels an interest in the welfare of religion, and considers it a sacred, and heavenly, and divine thing, a subject not to be approached with minds agitated by party spirit, or party violence, but rather to be meditated on in silence and in solitude, and to be argued with greater sobriety and solemnity than Plato used when demonstrating the doctrines of his moral philosophy; whoever so feels, will, I am sure, agree that this tumultuous, this unseemly, and unchristian way of appealing to the grossest passions, and exposing the doctrines of religion to an approbation or disapprobation expressed by the cheers and shouts of multitudes, is essentially degrading to its character, and tends to make men rather mix it up in their minds with the worst and most unworthy of passions and feelings, than to associate it with those sentiments of awful respect, and deep veneration, and pure affection, which it should inspire in the breasts of men.

It is only by such feelings being, as far as possible, diffused, that so odious, unjust, and cruel a system can possibly be crushed. But this is only a secondary consideration; what I wish principally to inculcate is,—that you insist always on proof, and be not satisfied with declamation. Never take the word of those who profess to give our doctrines, and who allege merely their assertions for it. Ask where those articles are recorded, where such a dogma is laid down, in what books or on what authority it is assumed that this creed, or article of faith, or practice, is taught by the Catholic Church. Insist that every point urged against us be demonstrated; and I am confident that such a system, if pursued, must lead essentially to the narrowing of differences at present existing between us, and bring many, who now wander, once more within the true Church. This anticipation may appear a dream, or an object far beyond our reach; but we have been too long divided, too long separated; and it is

impossible not to suppose that divine Providence has appointed some method whereby all well-meaning and right-thinking men may be brought into one way of faith.

Another, and a still more important admonition, I wish to give, directed primarily to those who are not already members of the Church and religion which I have endeavored to uphold; that they proceed to the inquiry boldly, and without reserve; that they imagine not there is a single point whereon we shrink from individual and close investigation. They must not fancy, if they have hitherto done so, that we require so blind a submission to Church authority, as to refuse to satisfy sincere inquirers of the grounds of our faith, on every point—that we say even to the faithful, “Be silent and believe;” subject your understanding and reason to our teaching, and investigate no more. On the contrary, there is no point on which we do not court inquiry. Nothing would give us greater delight, than that any, who have been moved by what they have heard, should apply their minds to study, and seek whatever assistance we can give them in their endeavors to discover the whole truth of Christ. And again another and still more important exhortation is this; if the inquiry, once made, shall prove satisfactory to their minds, if conviction shall follow, that the system which has been till then believed is not correct, and that the truth of Christ is to be found with us, let them not hesitate one moment between that discovery and the next step. It is fortunate that, in this country, nothing can any longer make a return to our religion odious or discreditable in any man. He does not thereby abandon the religion of his country, but only returns to that of his ancestors: to that religion to which we owe whatever is splendid in our monuments, glorious in our history, or beautiful and sacred in our institutions. When a learned and high-minded individual, after mature deliberation, and after having filled all Germany with the reputation of his writings, had become a member of the Catholic Church, that being a time when such changes were rarer among learned men than they are at present, it naturally excited considerable interest. The first time he appeared at court, he was thus addressed by his sovereign—“I cannot respect the man who has abandoned the religion of his fathers.” “Nor I, Sir,” he replied, “for if my ancestors had not abandoned the religion of *their* fathers, they would not have now put me to the trouble of returning to it. Such was the feeling that animated him, and made him brave the bitter taunt. Whatever apparent difficulties may seem to accompany the change, how-

ever earth may rise against it, however connections and friends may tell you that you are making a shipwreck of all your happiness, depend upon it those difficulties will quickly disappear, and with them all that anxious care and racking uneasiness which must exist while the mind is in a state of doubt. For the moment the resolution is once taken, the hand of Providence will be instantly stretched forth to make that easy which before was difficult, and, linked in yours, will lead you forward over every rugged path, and every rising obstacle, to a secure and happy goal.

The course of lectures which I have till now delivered has been directed to point out the short and obvious way whereby this pilgrimage after God's dwelling-place with men may be best discovered. I have endeavored to show you the demonstration of Christ's rule of faith, upon broad and well-constructed principles, and tried to draw your attention from partial and detailed investigations, to the examination of the groundworks of faith.

For, my brethren, if God exacts correctness of belief in every point, He must have provided ample and easy means to attain it: and the advantage which men have taken of these means must be an important consideration in the judgment which He will make. His religion must be a path palpable and pervious, equally to the poor as to the rich; practicable to the feeble as well as to the strong: it must be a system which, while it satisfies, by its rigid demonstration, the scruples of the learned, explains itself, by the simplicity of its proofs, to the untutored inquirer. Its discovery cannot be meant to occupy the whole of life in search,—its acquisition cannot be intended to absorb all our mind by difficulties. It must be a system of belief, not of doubt; a state of peace, and not of uneasiness. It cannot, therefore, consist in the discussion of every separate point, which requires time, labor, and talent, and often ends in perplexity and agitation; it must be some visible and comprehensive whole, which unites and combines in itself the entire of God's revelation and law. In other words, it cannot consist in a mere gleaning of detached articles of faith from the most discordant communities, but it must be one of the numerous divisions of Christians which is the depositary, and holds the archives of the entire doctrine of Christ Jesus.

My brethren, if the stranger, who wished to worship the true God at Jerusalem, had been told that, though the synagogues and places of prayer might be numerous, there was only one

temple in which sacrifice was acceptable to Him, in what way would he have sought this favored spot? Attracted by one superior building, would he have taken the description of the sacred edifice in the inspired pages, and endeavored to ascertain, by minute comparison with its separate parts, that this was really the fabric to which such glorious privileges were reserved? Would he have counted the exact number of its chambers, or discussed the architectural details of its vestibules and its windows, its columns and its roof? And if he thought he discovered some discrepancies in any one of these, would he have turned from it, satisfied that *its* claims were false, and determined to explore the obscurer quarters of the city, for a more exact type? Instead of this, the moment the stately, the superb, and finished edifice caught his eye, towering over every other pigmy building, exact in proportion and unity of design, resting with untottering foundations upon the very spot where its inspired builder laid its first stone; above all, when he entered the vast court, and beheld the great High Priest still wearing on his forehead the golden plate which declared him "Holy to the Lord," in uninterrupted succession to the first Pontiff of his religion, and saw the Levites sacrificing on the same altar, and performing the same liturgy, as were consecrated on the first solemn establishment of God's worship,—surely, upon seeing all this, he would yield to the overpowering conviction of his feelings, and, despising the slow process of measurement by the compass and rule, pronounce himself assured that he had found the true house of God, and be satisfied that the subsequent examination of details could not result at variance with the great and general evidences of its identity.

Reason, then, in like manner now. Think not to discover the only true Church of Christ by the painful task of minute examination; but seek out some great and striking system which may verify prophecy, and answer to the attributes of its founder. Let it be as the mountain raised upon the top of hills, a landmark, drawing towards it the gaze of nations, and a rallying point, attracting the tribes of the earth to ascend. Let it be a kingdom worthy of the son of David, refusing every name but that which designates its universal dominion, truly extending in unity of government from sea to sea, and holding in willing submission the uttermost bounds of the earth. Let it be the abode of unity, harmony, and peace, where all believe and act by the same rule; for our God is not a God of dissension, but of peace. Let it be perpetual in history, unchangeable and un-

moved in principle; for, as the truth of God changes not, so must the depositary of it be unchanged no less. In fine, let it be one from which all others profess to have separated, but which has never departed from any; one from which others make it their boast that they have received priesthood, authority, and the word of God, but which itself scorns to derive them from any but the Eternal Founder of Christianity. If you find but one system which possesses all these qualities, and yet more, if you find only *one* which pretends to possess them, oh! by what principle of reason, or even of self-love, will you justify your refusal to embrace it? By what plea, before God, will you excuse any delay in studying and examining its claims?

Such has been our course till now: we have surveyed the building; it remains, that we boldly enter on the second task, of verifying the separate parts of that system, which, in the aggregate, so marvellously harmonizes with all that is revealed, and all that is worthy of God. This examination of particular dogmas will commence, at our next meeting, my second course.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all, brethren. Amen."*

* 2 Cor. xiii. 13.



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